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The Signification of Speech and Writing in the Work of
Charles Dickens

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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The Signification of Speech and Writing in the Work of Charles Dickens

Abstract

Drawing upon the work of Mikhail Bakhtin and Jacques Derrida, this study examines the representation of speech and writing in selected novels and journalism of Charles Dickens. The initial chapter describes the differing attitudes of Bakhtin and Derrida to language, writing and literature. A purely literary history is rejected, in favour of asking socially and historically grounded questions about the workings of language in selected texts. Then, the communication model of language, proposed by Roman Jakobson is examined. The theories of Derrida and Bakhtin are probed as alternative conceptualisations of the social process of language and textuality. The Jakobsonian model of language as a code common to all is rejected, and language is seen as 'heteroglossia' a collection of diverse voices. Bakhtin's focus on dialogue and the social context of utterance is balanced by Derrida's stress on writing as a textuality in which there is no dialogue of voices.

Informed by these ideas, the remaining chapters explore the diversity of languages and ways of representing speech and writing in Dickens. The social shibboleths of language, the misspellings, bad grammar, puns, misunderstandings and non-communication found in Dickens are explored. Several varieties of language are examined, thieves' cant, legal language, boxing and that of grammar itself. Each is represented and parodied by Dickens. Heteroglossia is then

seen to have penetrated the most personal aspect of language, that of human names. Finally, reading and writing themselves are explored as themes within Dickens' work. The historical context of literacy in Victorian England is related to Dickens's concerns. Dickens is shown to have closely observed the transition from oral to literate culture in which writing communicates in the absence of the author. His frequently humorous ways of signifying speech and writing was also a means of social comment.

References to Dickens' Works

All references are indicated in the text by the abbreviated title, followed by page number, both enclosed by square brackets. Thus: [BH 11-12]. In the case of David Copperfield, Dombey and Son, Edwin Drood, Martin Chuzzlewit, Oliver Twist and The Pickwick Papers, I have used the Clarendon Dickens (Oxford, 1966 -), which is clearly the best scholarly text with critical apparatus. All other references are to the Oxford Illustrated Dickens (London and New York, 1948- 1958). While this edition lacks any indication of the provenance of the texts, and contains many minor corruptions, it is a reasonably comprehensive edition which is generally available. Further description of the editions used will be found in the bibliography.

ABBREVIATIONS

BR	<u>Barnaby Rudge</u>	MC	<u>Martin Chuzzlewit</u>
BH	<u>Bleak House</u>	NN	<u>Nicholas Nickleby</u>
CS	<u>Christmas Stories</u>	OCS	<u>The Old Curiosity Shop</u>
DC	<u>David Copperfield</u>	OMF	<u>Our Mutual Friend</u>
DS	<u>Dombey and Son</u>	OT	<u>Oliver Twist</u>
ED	<u>Edwin Drood</u>	PP	<u>The Pickwick Papers</u>
GE	<u>Great Expectations</u>	SB	<u>Sketches by Boz</u>
HT	<u>Hard Times</u>	TTC	<u>A Tale of Two Cities</u>
LD	<u>Little Dorrit</u>	UT	<u>The Uncommercial Traveller</u>

Chapter 1

Language, Text and History

The central argument of this thesis is that theory cannot effectively be separated from practice. Any literary study, analysis or interpretation will perforce involve theoretical questions, even if these are unacknowledged. Sustained reflection on the rich language of Dickens' writings should lead to social and historically grounded questions about the workings of language, its power and authority in human life. The impetus for such a study began with considerable dissatisfaction with much of the existing work on Dickens' language and style. G. L. Brook's The Language of Dickens (1970), still the most wide-ranging of such studies, is content to catalogue the deviations of Dickens' language from the norms of standard English, with little attempt to explain either the deviations or the formation of the standard. More recent studies, for example, Robert Golding's Idiolects in Dickens (1985) continue this trend. With some notable exceptions much Dickensian scholarship remains stubbornly tied to Victorian aesthetics of realism- arrested like the stopped clock of Satis House.¹ The relations of language and consciousness have long been recognised as central to the concerns of later novelists, such as Joyce and Proust, and there is now a clear need to read Dickens in this European tradition, rather than a purely English novelist. The puns

and non-standard formations in Dickens should not be seen as childish folly or mere deviation from proper usage, but as phenomena worthy of investigation since they are involved with issues of consciousness, sexuality, identity and class.

During the process of writing the present study in the latter half of the 1980's a historical turn was increasingly discernible in Anglo-American literary studies. One could plausibly argue that the dominant paradigm in literary theory, deconstruction, which flourished in the first half of the last decade, is now tempered with a new historical awareness, which has been dubbed 'New Historicism.' J. Hillis Miller's 1986 Presidential Address to the Modern Languages Association of America recognises this call to history.² The discovery and translation in the West of the work of Mikhail Bakhtin coincides with the demand for historically grounded literary studies that show an awareness of the workings of language. At the same time social historians are increasingly examining the role of language. A recent collection of essays The Social History of Language (1987) urges that historians should acquaint themselves with the methods of sociolinguistics.³ There is a renewed interest in discourse in British Sociology. The influential journal Economy and Society has carried much material on Foucault and Bakhtin.⁴ Undoubtedly this is a timely moment to re-examine the writing of literary history after the post-structuralist cataclysm. However one should beware of the trend towards a simplistic 'return to history' after the death of Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, Barthes and Foucault and the mental breakdown of Althusser. Any return to history must

take account of the important reconceptualisations of language undertaken by the Parisian thinkers. Accordingly, while I share the general appreciation of Bakhtin,⁵ I do not see his work as necessarily opposed in all respects to deconstruction, nor do I regard the work of Jacques Derrida as an irrationalist philosophy, or as a mere irrelevance to literary studies.⁶ In the work which follows, I attempt to move between Bakhtin and Derrida, drawing upon aspects of their thought. Naturally, my account will be selective, since it is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to serve as a ground for the understanding of Dickensian linguistics which follows. Both Bakhtin and Derrida are critical of the communication model of language in which a message is sent from one autonomous human being to another. The communication model of language was set out in a famous drawing of two (male) heads in Saussure's Course in General Linguistics and elaborated in one of the most important papers describing the relations between literature and language: Roman Jakobson's 'Closing Statement' given at a conference on style held at Indiana in 1958 and published in the proceedings. I shall devote an entire chapter to the Jakobson diagram and its critique, since the issues it raises are important, perhaps nowhere more so than in studying Dickens and because the communication model, despite the work of Bakhtin and Derrida still dominates much linguistic and literary thought.⁷

Bakhtin, Jakobson, and Derrida all develop their thought from the matrix of German idealist philosophy. Kant, Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger are all crucial to their work, although

each reacts against these philosophers in different ways. While Derrida's relations to German idealism are explicit in his work, the importance of this theoretical matrix has not been made so obvious by Jakobson and Bakhtin. Peter Steiner has however indicated that the terms 'foreground' and 'background' as used in Russian Formalism and the Prague School derive from the work of Edmund Husserl.⁸ The relation of Bakhtin's work to hermeneutics and phenomenology has not been adequately described, but an examination of the footnotes in his writings indicates their importance. Very crudely, the difference between Bakhtin, Jakobson and Derrida as regards language is that Bakhtin developed a socio-historical approach grounded upon the process of dialogue in language, Jakobson developed a formalist communicative approach, while for Derrida all communication, including communication with oneself is a form of postal or telecommunication, (etymologically communication from afar, across a gap of space and time).⁹ Robert Scholes is correct in asserting that much of Derrida's early work consists of demonstrating 'that we are no more present to one another when we speak than when we put a message in a bottle and cast it upon the waters.'¹⁰ Jakobson and Bakhtin do not particularly distinguish written language from speech, since they see verbal communication as the basis of language. Derrida, notoriously, insinuates writing into any communication, including speech.

There is a continuing dispute over the politics and interpretation of Bakhtin which resembles that conducted over the texts of Walter Benjamin not so long ago. The secondary

literature on Bakhtin continues to grow. The following is merely a selection of what I have found useful: Tzvetan Todorov, Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogic Principle (Manchester University Press, Manchester (1984) first published in French 1981, Paul de Man, 'Dialogue and Dialogism', Poetics Today, 4,1 (1983), pp.99-107, David Carroll 'The Alterity of Discourse: Form, History, And the Question of the Political in M. M. Bakhtin' Diacritics 13, 2 (Summer 1983) pp. 65-83 Samuel M. Weber, 'The Intersection: Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Diacritics (Winter 1985), pp. 94-111 (Both Diacritics articles take a post-structuralist view.) Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on His Work, edited by Gary Saul Morson (University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1986) Graham Pechey 'On the Borders of Bakhtin: Dialogization, Decolonization' Oxford Literary Review 9, 1-2 (1987) pp 59-84, David Lodge 'After Bakhtin' in The Linguistics of Writing edited by Nigel Fabb and others (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1987) pp. 88-102} Bakhtin's biographers, Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist argue that Bakhtin was primarily a religiously inclined existential thinker who only spoke through the 'voices' of Marxism, because he was constrained by the times to do so.¹¹ Present day Marxists, whether of Eurocommunist or Soviet persuasion, insist on the political resonance of his thought, and in the phrase of Ken Hirschkop, protest against 'the domestication of Bakhtin.'¹² There is also disagreement over the precise constituents of the Bakhtin canon. Rabelais and His World, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics and The Dialogic Imagination are entirely the work of Bakhtin himself, but the part played by Bakhtin in the authorship of a book on Russian

Formalism attributed to Medvedev and Bakhtin, and two books attributed to V.N. Voloshinov, is disputed.¹³ One accepted way of dealing with these texts is to refer to them as products of 'The Bakhtin School',¹⁴ for clearly the issues raised in Voloshinov's Marxism and the Philosophy of Language are contiguous with the later Dialogic Imagination.

In her preface to the French translation of Bakhtin's Dostoevsky, Julia Kristeva asked a pertinent question:

... how does one interpret a work when it is taken out of its place, time and language and then revived beyond a gap which is temporal, geographical, historical and social?¹⁵

This question is applicable, not just to Bakhtin, but to any text. Moreover it is a question which Bakhtin's work itself explores. Bakhtin's work is increasingly seen as a move which anticipated and pushed past sociolinguistics and deconstruction, contemporary hermeneutics and reception aesthetics, a mapping of the field of literary studies after post-structuralism.¹⁶ However, much of the recent acclaim of Bakhtin has lacked critical edge; it seeks to elucidate and praise, delighted to return 'literature' to 'history' in a way that is said to be before and yet beyond post-structuralism.¹⁷ Bakhtin's philosophy of language is in many ways an innocent Marxism, which addresses communality in joyful struggle, very different from the melancholy science of Adorno, Benjamin or Gramsci. A return to innocence in historiography is possible only at the expense of ignoring the contradictions and inconsistencies of Bakhtin's thought, rendering his heteroglossic discourse into monologue, suppressing its genealogy and the politics of the sign.

The most overtly political (and brilliant) characterisation of semiotics in the work of 'The Bakhtin School' occurs near the beginning of Voloshinov's Marxism and the Philosophy of Language:

Class does not coincide with the sign community... which is the totality of users of the same set of signs for ideological communication. Thus various different classes will use one and the same language. As a result, differently oriented accents intersect in every ideological sign. Sign becomes an arena of the class struggle.... The ruling class strives to impart a supraclass, eternal character to the ideological sign, to extinguish or drive inward the struggle between social value judgements which occurs in it...¹⁸

This was written in a context of Soviet linguistics which at that time were dominated by the views of N. J. Marr, but it contains an important message for contemporary sociolinguistics.¹⁹ Turning to current problems in linguistics, it is clear that this conception of language as struggle has the potentiality of revolutionising sociolinguistics, which so far has often confined itself to cataloguing different forms of language and lacks an adequate theory of the manifestation of power in language. As Colin MacCabe justly remarks, social questions about language tend to be asked after questions about the language's constitution, instead of being an integral part of the linguistics itself.²⁰ MacCabe points to the importance of the Imaginary (in a Lacanian sense) within language. It is not that National languages or speech communities do not exist, but that they have an Imaginary unity. One may well contend that sociolinguistics is lacking in any social theory, and in MacCabe's words is 'without any recourse to concepts of class, race or gender which would bring genuine

edge and understanding to what so often seems like the barren compiling of evidence.'²¹ Allon White, too sees the need to reinvigorate sociolinguistics, in his case by drawing directly on Bakhtin.²² There is another problem for which Bakhtin provides few answers; sociolinguistics deals almost entirely with contemporary spoken language, but historical documents (including novels) are written.²³ The 'linguistics of writing' present their own problems, familiar from the disciplines of hermeneutics and philology, the disciplines which scholars like Saussure and Bakhtin renounced. As I hope to show, the cost of that renunciation is explored in Derrida's Of Grammatology.

All the various interpretations of Bakhtin agree on one point; the concept of dialogue is central to his work. As in the subtitle of Tzvetan Todorov's book, Bakhtin's work exhibits The Dialogical Principle. Most of Bakhtin's other critical terms such as 'carnival' and 'canonical', 'heteroglossia' and 'monoglossia' are permutations of the central binary opposition between dialogue and monologue. As in the case of Saussure and Jakobson, Bakhtin conceives of the essence of language as a verbal interchange between two persons. The difference is that, for Bakhtin, these 'persons' are always seen in their social setting.

Utterance... is constructed between two socially organised persons, and in the absence of a real addressee, an addressee is presupposed in the person... of a normal representative of the social group to which the speaker belongs. The word is oriented toward an addressee, toward who that addressee might be: a fellow-member or not of the same social group, of higher or lower standing (the addressee's hierarchical status) someone connected with the speaker by (kinship)... or not. There can be no such thing as an abstract addressee, a man unto himself.... with such a person, we would have

no language in common, literally and figuratively.... Word is a two- sided act. It is determined equally by whose word it is and for whom it is meant. As word, it is precisely the production of the reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener, addresser and addressee.²⁴
[Emphasis in original]

This stress on the social construction of language is an important contribution to linguistics, but as a concept 'social dialogue', I would argue, does not adequately cover the range of communication between groups and institutions. The rapid development of modern communication technologies has lead theorists to question whether communication can always be reduced to a dialogue between persons. Writing, multifarious encoding technologies, and the dynamics of groups and institutions demand a wider framework of analysis.²⁵

The Bakhtin school did not distinguish clearly between speech and writing as signification systems, indeed Voloshinov goes so far as to write 'A book, i.e., a verbal performance in print, is also an element of verbal communication.'²⁶
[Emphasis in original] Bakhtin is radically phonocentric. His valuation of spoken language and effort to see it in its social context is probably a reaction against his education as a philologist, which was predicated upon the decipherment of written forms and the construction of abstract paradigms.²⁷

'Discourse' (slovo) in Bakhtin is always the utterance of a voice, or more accurately a dialogue of voices. In claiming him as a precursor of post-structuralism, Julia Kristeva argues that Bakhtin's concept of 'voice':

... is not the phone which comes to us from Greek texts and is identical with the speaker: it is a disembodied phoné which has lost its truth and is anxious about the locale of its emission: the place of the speaking subject.²⁸

This account of 'voice' seems more Derridian than Bakhtinian, defined as it is by absence and negation. Kristeva and Todorov- who in his book on Bakhtin often follows her by using her term 'intertextuality', without admitting it to be a term of her discourse, rather than Bakhtin's- produce a Bakhtin orientated towards textuality in keeping with their own concerns. Kristeva's essays on Bakhtin and the novel belong to her Tel Quel period of rigorous textuality and defiant anti-humanism. Todorov is less of a materialist than the young Kristeva yet his account is more textually inclined than Bakhtin's own, for Bakhtin describes a 'dialogue of voices,' rather than 'intertextual play'. In his concept of 'voice', Bakhtin is attempting to capture not only the speaking presence, but the diversity of ideological positions indicated by the phrase 'They don't speak our language.' The voice is always mingled with alien elements, the words of the Other. It is not the monologue of the individual speaker, but dialogic relationships which are the ground of language. Bakhtin insists:

Language lives only in the dialogic interaction of those who make use of it. Dialogic interaction is indeed the authentic sphere where language lives.²⁹

Every utterance (spoken or written) must have an author, but Bakhtin indicates that he means not the producer of the utterance, but the addresser, the position of the speaking subject as manifested by the text.

Every utterance... has its author, whom we hear in the very utterance of its creator. Of the real author, as he exists outside the utterance, we can know absolutely nothing at all. And the forms of this real authorship can be very diverse. A given work can be the product of a collaborative effort, it can be created by successive... generations... but in all cases we hear in it a unified creative will, a definite position, to which it is possible to react dialogically. A dialogic reaction personifies every utterance to which it responds.³⁰

While in his 'Chronotope' essay Bakhtin wrote:

The text as such never appears as a dead thing; beginning with any text- and sometimes passing through a lengthy series of mediating links- we always arrive in the final analysis, at the human voice, which is to say we come up against the human being.³¹

Bakhtin humanises texts, a practice very different from the textuality of post-structuralism.

Bakhtin's conception of the novel as a genre is wide, but it will be seen to turn on distinctions between direct and reported speech. The novel consists of quotations of the speech of another; poetry does not necessarily include quoted speech, and drama has no authorial or narrative voice to control and position its speech which is put directly into the mouths of characters. Bakhtin has an impoverished view of poetry and drama, for certainly satiric poetry is full of quoted voices³², but Bakhtin tends to reclassify narrative poetry as a species of the novel, indeed Pushkin's epic poem Eugene Onegin is treated as an exemplary novel.³³

The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organised. The internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behaviour, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious

languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even of the hour... this internal stratification present in every language at any given moment of its historical existence is the indispensable prerequisite for the novel as a genre.³⁴

This diversity of social speech types, Bakhtin terms heteroglossia. The novel does not consist of raw linguistic data comparable to overheard conversations. The linguistic materials in any novel are artistically organised. This is a just and sensible observation- the speech of Dickens' Cockney characters is, as many scholars have shown, built up from a few stereotypical features that he thought characteristic of the actual speech of working-class Londoners.³⁵ Unhappily, Bakhtin then goes on to use a series of specular metaphors of reflection and refraction, which he combines with his usual auditory and musical terms.

What is present in the novel is an artistic system of languages, or more accurately a system of images of languages, and the real task of stylistic analysis consists in uncovering all the available orchestrating languages in the composition of the novel grasping the precise degree of distancing that separates each language from its most immediate semantic instantiation in the work as a whole, and the varying angles of refraction of intention within it, understanding their dialogic interrelationships and - finally- if there is direct authorial discourse, determining the heteroglot background outside the work that dialogizes it.³⁶

The visual connotations of 'image' and 'reflection' and 'refraction' do not aid the argument. Language is a spatial and temporal phenomenon. Visual and specular models reproduce the mimetic assumptions that deconstruction seeks to break down, and all too often degenerate into mere

analogy. Such is the power of the mimetic cultural tradition that mimesis is often taken as being a true reflection, rather than as any kind of mediation. How for example the material base is 'reflected' or mediated by the superstructure and how this is displaced in language and art is a continuing topic.³⁷ There is a problem with the construction of a metalanguage to describe the operation of language itself, after all when one describes language as 'opaque' or 'transparent' visual metaphors are introduced.³⁸

Elsewhere Bakhtin draws purely upon musical and auditory metaphors, this seems more acceptable, for at least choral singing and musical notation share the same spatial and temporal plane as spoken and written language. Yet the vexed question of the status of 'voice' in written texts remains obscured. A consideration of his treatment of Dostoevsky will demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of Bakhtin's approach. The main theoretical burden of Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics is carried by its fifth chapter, 'Discourse in Dostoevsky'. Here he explains the meaning of his concepts and outlines the importance of that novelist's work in the creation of Bakhtin's own theory of language. By 'discourse', Bakhtin means:

...language in its concrete living totality, and not language as the specific object of linguistics, something arrived at through a completely legitimate and necessary abstraction from various aspects of the concrete life of the word.³⁹

In Saussurian terms, Bakhtin wishes to consider those aspects of language which lie outside the domain of la langue, which is the object described by linguistics and which in Marxism and the Philosophy of Language is traced to mathesis (the

representation of knowledge as a mathematical table), to Leibniz's universal grammar and to Descartes.⁴⁰ But it is precisely those aspects of language, of la parole, which are excluded from a tabular representation of language as a series of abstract relationships which are crucially important to Bakhtin. He admits that

...from the vantage points provided by pure linguistics, it is impossible to detect... any really essential differences between a monologic and a polyphonic use of language.⁴¹

The term Polyphony, drawn from musical discourse, was Bakhtin's earliest attempt to describe the phenomena of multi-voiced discourse, which he later in such works as 'Discourse in the Novel' developed into the more powerful term heteroglossia.

In Dostoevsky's polyphonic novels, Bakhtin admits

There is significantly less language differentiation... fewer language styles, territorial and social dialects, professional jargons... than in the work of [monologic novelists]. It might even seem that the heroes of Dostoevsky's novels all speak one and the same language, namely the language of their author. For this monotony of language many reproached Dostoevsky, including Leo Tolstoy.⁴²

Nevertheless, Bakhtin gives Tolstoy as an example of a monologic novelist. Bakhtin's point appears to be that Tolstoy encodes many varieties of language, French, the dialects of peasants, army jargon and many other discourses, while Dostoevsky sticks to standard educated Russian throughout, even in representing people who would not normally speak that way. (Bakhtin himself does not provide any examples.) He does not admit this lack of variety to be a weakness on Dostoevsky's part, instead he regards the

encoding of speech forms in itself, as a superficial phenomenon.

But the fact is that language differentiation and the clear-cut 'speech characterizations' of characters have the greatest artistic significance precisely in the creation of objectified and finalized images of people. The more objectified a character the more sharply his speech physiognomy stands out. To be sure language diversity and speech characterizations remain important in a polyphonic novel, but this importance is diminished, and most importantly the artistic function of these phenomena change. [In the polyphonic novel]... what matters... is not the mere presence of specific language styles... what matters is the dialogic angle at which these styles... are juxtaposed or counterposed in the work.⁴³

[Emphasis in original]

It is these dialogic relationships, including that between the speaker and his discourse, that interest Bakhtin. My own view is that Bakhtin has engaged in special pleading for Dostoevsky and in developing his dialogic view of discourse, has ignored an important aspect of the novel, that it is written. Because a novel is written it has a graphic potential, besides its capability of creating the illusion of speech. Tolstoy utilised that graphic potential in creating the cosmopolitan language of Anna Karenina. When one looks at the Russian text, the many English, French and German terms used appear in the orthography of their original languages, they leap out from the surrounding cyrillic text.⁴⁴ For example in Part 1, Chapter 21, when Vronsky talks to his English horse trainer the man replies in English. When Vronsky is told that 'In a steeplechase everything depends on riding and on pluck,'⁴⁵ the word pluck appears in English, as it does in the sentence which follows when Vronsky reflects on its meaning and in the English

phrase he recalls to describe the nobility of his mare: 'the blood that tells'. English is also used when the trainer has difficulty in pronouncing the Russian name 'Mahotin', and attempts 'Ma-k... Mak...' instead of producing the throaty sound which resembles the 'ch' in the Scottish 'loch.' Such foreign words and phrases are thus distanced from the surrounding cyrillic text. In the Russian text the point that Vronsky and Anna are often speaking French instead of Russian is much stronger than in any translation.

Of course Tolstoy did not have to do this, he could have merely stated that they spoke French and then explained what they said in Russian, but instead he incorporates the foreign language into the native text.⁴⁶ Tolstoy also cleverly hints at the analogy between Vronsky's relation to his horse and that which will develop between Anna and himself. The mare is called Фру-Фру (pronounced /fru fru/), which seems to be a representation in Cyrillic characters of the French frou-frou an onomatopoeic formation which means the rustling of a woman's skirts. The graphic difference between the alphabets of Russian and other European languages is used as a distancing device, what the Russian Formalists called ostranenie or estrangement. There is no place in Bakhtin's poetics for such graphic devices, because they are aspects of the linguistics of writing. The polylinguistic skills of Tolstoy's prose ought, one might suppose, to have been related to Bakhtin's heteroglossia, but Bakhtin relegates him to the inferior status of a monological writer. After the Doestoevsky study Bakhtin gradually developed his concept of 'polyphonic' language into the more powerful idea of 'heteroglossia'. In 'Discourse in the Novel', his mature

theoretical statement of the philosophy of language in the novel, Bakhtin makes distinctions between 'monoglossia' and 'heteroglossia'. Finally, because he came to see all language no matter how apparently single-voiced, as 'heteroglossia', Bakhtin began to write of degrees of 'heteroglossia.' The ideas of 'polyphony' were thus subsumed by the more encompassing concept of 'heteroglossia.'

This blindness to the graphic aspects of texts continues in the work of those who follow Bakhtin. John Frow, in his Marxism and Literary History (1986) revises Bakhtin's concept of 'voice' by drawing upon Barthes' characterisation of the classic text in S/Z as an interweaving of multiple voices.⁴⁷ For Frow, the 'voices' of Bakhtin need not necessarily be personified as the utterance of a speaker, they are merely 'positions appropriate to a kind of speaker.'⁴⁸ Frow demonstrates the theory by means of illustrations taken from Little Dorrit; one of which is this:

Plornish, having been made acquainted with the cause of action from the Defendant's own mouth, gave Arthur to understand that the Plaintiff was a "Chaunter" - meaning, not a singer of anthems, but a seller of horses- and that he (Plornish) considered that ten shillings in the pound "would settle handsome," and that more would be a waste of money.⁴⁹

Frow then comments 'The capitalisation of "the Defendant" and "the Plaintiff" perhaps indicates that the intonational stress is a quotation from Plornish, who is in awe of the legal register he is adopting.' Certainly Dickens is citing legal language, but I do not agree that we are intended to imagine Plornish actually stressing the words 'Defendant' and 'Plaintiff.' There is a another explanation. Capital

letters, or a different type-face or orthography, was and still is, used routinely in many legal documents, so that lawyers can easily see which part of the document relates to the actions of the persons involved in the case. This convention is followed in many types of legal document, from writs to mortgages. Dickens is alluding to legal language, and capitalising the roles of the parties, just as they would be in any court document. Later, in the passages cited by Frow, Clennam and Plornish are repeatedly referred to as 'The Principal and his instrument.' (A legal instrument may be a person or a document.) Frow has been misled by Bakhtin's stress on voice here. This is indeed an intertextual allusion, but it has to do with written procedures, rather than any 'voices.' To understand what is going on in this passage, one needs to be aware of Dickens' graphic devices (of which capitalisation is the simplest) and also to know what legal documents, such as writs, looked like. The intertextual reference is not literary, but legal.

While his work is certainly distinctive, Bakhtin does not have a methodology for doing literary criticism, nor does he offer a poetics- indeed his work is as Kristeva terms it, 'the ruin of a poetics'.⁵⁰ His dialogic theory of language is a theory of process suited to the 'open' text and a means of opening texts that were once considered 'closed.' His historical inquiry into the meanings of texts is conducted through and by language, not a unified language, but a series of discourses which carry authority, and in which there are contending voices. In his meditations on language and history, Bakhtin makes considerable demands on those who

would follow his example. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist are correct in drawing attention to the epochal history of the French Annales School in relation to Bakhtin, for like them his interest in large scale cultural transformations demanded monumental cross-disciplinary learning.⁵¹ In his mature statement 'Discourse in the Novel' Bakhtin argues that pure stylistics is insufficient. He develops the term heteroglossia as his main explanatory concept, which is both a happier and more powerful tool than the earlier polyphony:

A stylistic analysis of the novel cannot be productive outside a profound understanding of heteroglossia, an understanding of the dialogue of languages as it exists in a given era. But in order to understand such a dialogue, or even to become aware initially that a dialogue is going on at all, mere knowledge of the linguistic and stylistic profile of the languages involved will be insufficient: what is needed is a profound understanding of each language's socio-ideological meaning and an exact knowledge of the social distribution and ordering of all the other ideological voices of the era.⁵²

Because language is in a constant flux, this programme is complicated by the absorption of 'heteroglossia' into purely literary language (which Bakhtin curiously regarded as a minor problem) and by the social construction of new contexts, new available meanings. This latter process Bakhtin terms 're-accentuation'- it is both a major difficulty for any scholar and the motivation of literary studies.

Within certain limits the process of re-accentuation is unavoidable, legitimate and even productive. But these limits may easily be crossed when a work is distant from us and when we begin to perceive it against a background completely foreign to it.⁵³

Unfortunately, Bakhtin does not specify how we recognise the limits. He falls back on artistic, ideological and linguistic skills of the reader in guiding interpretation.

John Frow has drawn upon Bakhtin in the course of a sophisticated critique. Frow not only calls for a Marxist literary history, he attempts to produce it, as few are willing or able to do. He ambitiously attempts a unification of comparative literary studies, linguistics, western Marxist theory and post-structuralism. Since Frow relates theory to close textual interpretation and is interested both in linguistic and historical processes, it would seem germane to look at his general position and his treatment of Bakhtin's reading of Dickens in detail.

Frow finds damaging shifts of method and political stance in the work of Bakhtin, where the critical Marxism of the early work is replaced by 'a populist vocabulary concerned with permanent or recurrent structures of antagonism rather than with differential structures of change.'⁵⁴

This is why, for all the brilliance of its construction of the different chronotopic structures of the novel, there is no history of the novel in The Dialogic Imagination or in Rabelais and His World. The novel is understood on the one hand by way of a constitutive and ahistorical opposition to the genre of poetry, conceived as a realm of the self-possession and self-presence of voice; and on the other hand by reference to "the authentic folkloric roots" of the novel in the culture of popular laughter. [Frow's emphasis] ⁵⁵

Frow's statement that 'there is no history of the novel' in what are generally seen as being Bakhtin's major works, initially struck me as outrageous, for the history is surely in the detail, but now I see the statement as arising out of

a deep-seated difference of approach to culture and writing. For it is not as Frow would have it that 'there is no history of the novel' in Bakhtin but that there is no history of the novel. Bakhtin was concerned with the relation of literary texts to the historical processes of language and culture over a very long time period, while Frow despite great methodological subtlety remains committed to a specifically literary history. Mere Literary history, whether of a Marxist or any other variety, is a narrow, conservative and altogether minor genre. I can best illustrate the difference in approach by contrasting Bakhtin's interpretation of Dickens with that of Frow. One section of 'Discourse in the Novel' contains Bakhtin's thoughts on Dickens, and he entitled it: 'Heteroglossia in the Novel'.⁵⁶ Bakhtin draws the general conclusion:

Comic style (of the English sort) is based... on the stratification of common language and on the possibilities available for isolating from these strata, to one degree or another, one's own intentions, without ever completely merging with them. It is precisely the diversity of speech, and not the unity of a normative shared language, that is the ground of style. [Bakhtin's emphasis] ⁵⁷

Prior to his close readings of Little Dorrit, Bakhtin had suggested the forms of discourse represented and parodied in the comic novel. In Fielding, Sterne, Dickens and Thackeray (among others) Bakhtin finds 'a comic-parodic re-processing of almost all the levels of literary language, both conversational and written, that were current at the time.'⁵⁸ These include parliamentary speeches and protocol, legal language, the language of newspaper reports, business jargon, the language of academia, the bible and sermons. The authorial voice interrupts and distances these parodized

representations. The main source of language in a comic novel is seen as being an average norm of spoken and written language for any given social group.

However to John Frow, this description seems to 'miss the organizing subgenres from which the Dickensian novel is built.'⁵⁹

Very schematically one could say that these are a multistranded form of the picaresque derived basically from Smollett; and a form of Gothic which perhaps owes more to Victorian melodrama than to the Gothic novel proper.⁶⁰

Now, Frow has some interesting things to say about the plots of these genres. Thus, the Gothic typically has a double time-scheme linking events of the past to the present; while the picaresque juxtaposes a series of simultaneous narratives. When they are fused, the novelistic discourse ties together plot structures which are dispersed in space and time.⁶¹ While what Frow has to say is both true and interesting, it is much more conventional than Bakhtin, for Frow is writing a literary history, in which the picaresque and gothic melodrama evolve into the Dickensian novel. Even judged as purely literary history, there seems little to distinguish this from the now old-fashioned studies of sources and influence. By contrast, Bakhtin's analysis refers to the extra-literary. His is, in the English translation of his own words, a sociological stylistics⁶² What is at issue between Bakhtin and Frow is the relation between history and literature, the context of historical events and processes in which we are to read the fictional text.

I have already noted that Bakhtin regards the absorption of heteroglossia into purely literary language as a minor problem.⁶³ This process is termed canonization and he confidently assures us:

For anyone who grasps the basic orchestrating languages and the basic lines of movement and play of intentions, canonization is no problem.⁶⁴

With hindsight, canonization may not be such a trivial problem after all, especially for those who can only admire, rather than attempt to emulate Bakhtin's immense erudition in languages and literatures. The question of canonization touches the central concept of Bakhtin's Rabelais. To what extent is Carnival a purely literary phenomenon, and how should our readings of Carnival in Rabelais be distinguished, from our reading of Carnival in historical events? Translating this into a Dickensian context, to what degree is the Cockney dialect a literary phenomenon? Mrs Gamp, for example, is an obvious Carnivalesque figure, but how does her discourse relate to the world of Victorian mid-wives? Is her wild exuberant language an expression of 'heteroglossia', or conversely has it been absorbed, tamed into a purely literary language. Is Carnival inherently subversive, as Bakhtin himself suggests, or conversely is it a licensed revolt, permitted from time to time by the authorities as a safety valve allowing social pressures to escape which might otherwise have led to a revolution or other large scale social transformation? There is no obvious answer to these questions. I shall examine the liminal status of the language of 'low-life' characters, in Chapter Three.

Many of the readings of Bakhtin performed by his various admirers in Britain and the United States are comfortably domestic, as witness Michael Holquist in his introduction to a collection of essays on Bakhtin:

Bakhtin lived all his life in dialogue: in dialogue with his friends Voloshinov and Kagan, or with other writers and thinkers such as Dostoevsky, Rabelais or Freud. But by far the most intense dialogue he participated in was the one he conducted with himself over the course of his long life in the pages of his notebooks.⁶⁵

These remarks gloss over the harsh realities of Bakhtin's life and work. Dialogue often suggests the face-to-face verbal interchange between two speakers (as in Saussure's diagram of the speech circuit), but it is used here by Holquist to refer also to the relation a reader has with an author via a text, and also to refer to the relation an author has with his own work. Bakhtin did indeed once have frequent conversations with his friends and colleagues V. N. Voloshinov and M. I. Kagan, but biographical sources, including Holquist and Clark's life indicate that the 'Bakhtin School' was short-lived. Intellectual work during the dictatorship of Stalin was perilous, Voloshinov disappeared sometime after 1934 and his fate is still undisclosed. Bakhtin himself was arrested and exiled to Kazakhstan, where he spent six years as a book-keeper. (His offence had been illegal membership of a religious discussion group.) P. N. Medvedev, the co-author with Bakhtin of a critique of Formalism, was 'illegally repressed; posthumously rehabilitated.'⁶⁶ Whatever the relations Bakhtin established with the texts of Freud, Rabelais, and Dostoevsky, these can hardly be called dialogic except metaphorically. Bakhtin

spent most of his life apart from the scholarly community. It is open to question whether books and his own manuscripts formed a sufficient substitute for direct exchange. When one sees Bakhtin's writing in the context of the events of his life there are some bitter paradoxes. The man who celebrated the disorderly excess of the physical body in Rabelais, was himself a chronic invalid, suffering from a degenerative bone disease diagnosed in 1921, which resulted in the amputation of a leg in 1938. The philosopher of dialogue was denied the recognition of scholarly interchange for most of his life. His work remained either out of print or unpublished for many years. Tzvetan Todorov concludes his study of Bakhtin by speculating to what extent the theory of dialogue may have originated from the desire to understand the absence of response. Though Todorov realises the agony of a man for whom 'the absence of response is evil absolute, hell'⁶⁷, he does not draw the consequences for Bakhtin's theory, when it is realised that the lack of dialogue is the ground for the desire for dialogue. The theory of dialogue is built over an abyss. Perhaps Bakhtin had to invent 'Dostoevsky', 'Rabelais' and 'Goethe' as his 'other', his dialogic partner, because of the absence of living human interlocutors. Bakhtin may have needed to invent multiple voiced discourses in his own writing as a response to his monological isolation in which his own spoken and written words were ignored or marginalised. In relating Bakhtin to the existential rather than Marxist tradition, Todorov draws on Bakhtin's late essay (it is really a series of pages culled from a notebook) 'The Problem of the Text.'⁶⁸ Here, towards the end of the essay, Bakhtin departs from his usual dyadic structure of thought to

envisage a third party. The author of any utterance, Bakhtin suggests, presupposes this third party, 'a higher superaddressee... whose absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time...'69 This 'third' may take different forms in different ages and cultures, God, science, absolute truth, the people, the court of history, conscience and so forth, but Bakhtin emphasises that it is not any mystical or metaphysical being, though it can be expressed in such forms, but 'a constitutive aspect of the whole utterance' that is capable of being revealed in it.⁷⁰ It is the nature of utterances to seek to be heard, to seek responsive understanding, and not to stop at immediate understanding, but to press on into the future. One may read this as a justification for Bakhtin's continued work, hoping for responsive understanding, if not in his own time, in the future. While the position of this 'third' seems absolute and final, it ought to be seen as a continuing dynamic. The utterance is not limited by the context of the original dialogue, but continues to resonate into the future. Bakhtin then suggests:

For the word (and, consequently, for a human being) there is nothing more terrible than a lack of response.⁷¹

I suggest that Bakhtin was precisely such a human being and that his specific relation to his incapacitated body and to his inability to speak and write openly, and his membership of marginal institutions, rather than the central elite scholarly institutions has much to do with the form and content of his work. Celebration of bodily excess becomes

ironic when uttered by a man who was physically incapacitated. Double-voiced discourse was a political necessity in a culture in which to speak openly was to risk imprisonment, exile or even death. Heteroglossia was inherently subversive in a monological political situation. In drawing attention to the existential strand of Bakhtin's thought, Todorov has not recognised the tragedy and pain that implies, for he has minimised the suffering and dread that are central to that tradition.

My reading of Bakhtin here stresses his alienation from life and language of the canonical culture of his time, being in 'internal exile' he becomes more akin to Derrida than an opponent. Bakhtin seems to have regarded his written texts as dynamic processes rather than as finished objects that have reached a completed state. (Holquist relates a story that during wartime shortage, Bakhtin used the manuscript of his book on Bildungsroman as cigarette paper; as the publishing house copy was destroyed by enemy action only a small portion remains - the small remainder that Bakhtin had not smoked.)⁷² Such a cavalier attitude to his own manuscripts is consistent with Bakhtin's provisional attitude to speech and writing, for no utterance is finished absolutely. Its meaning depends upon the dialogic imagination between author and listener or reader.

At this point one may diverge from Bakhtin, to explore the dissimilarity of speech and writing, as preparation for the discussion of Derrida which follows. In 'The Problem of the Text' Bakhtin makes the point, which I should like to reiterate:

The third party... is a constitutive aspect of the whole utterance.... this follows from the nature of the word, which always wants to be heard, always seeks responsive understanding, and does not stop at immediate understanding but presses on further and further (indefinitely).⁷³

It seems to me that Bakhtin does not recognise the problem of the text, because he sees written and spoken utterance as essentially identical. Paul Ricoeur in 'What is a text?' demonstrates the poverty of this approach.⁷⁴ For Ricoeur the definition of text is precisely that it is not dialogue.

It does not suffice to say that reading is a dialogue with the author through his work, for the relation of the reader to the book is of a completely different nature. Dialogue is an exchange of questions and answers; there is no exchange of this sort between the writer and the reader. The writer does not respond to the reader. Rather, the book divides the act of writing and the act of reading into two sides, between which there is no communication. The reader is absent from the act of writing; the writer is absent from the act of reading. The text thus produces a double eclipse of the reader and the writer. It thereby replaces the relation of dialogue, which directly connects the voice of one to the hearing of the other.⁷⁵

To put flesh on the bones of Ricoeur's argument, it can be seen that my relation to reading the texts of Bakhtin are very different to any conversation Bakhtin and I could possibly have had about the same topics. When I read Bakhtin, I do not listen to his voice, explaining, arguing, correcting, answering my questions and asking his own in return, but I am struggling with the interpretation of a document, postulating various contexts, seeking to reconstruct the ideological position of Bakhtin and his audience across a gap of time, place and language. In a conversation Bakhtin could reiterate and reformulate

utterances, respond to my criticisms and lack of knowledge and misapprehensions of the context of his own work. While such a conversation is impossible, the existence of written texts enable an infinity of people who never met Bakhtin to become aware of his work. To read his books in new contexts that he could not have anticipated. The text continues to work after the death of the author (this is a frequent theme of Derrida's). At the same time written language is more fragile than speech, for in such circumstances as Bakhtin's Bildungsroman study the utterance is lost completely, unless another manuscript survives as yet unknown. This is the situation of all written texts. At the present time, I would argue that the socio-historical understanding of the novel mapped out by Bakhtin is both the most powerful and the best theory of the workings of language that we have - except in one area- the linguistics of writing.

It is necessary to take account of another powerful ideology in literary studies, that of deconstruction, which has concentrated upon the implications of writing even to the exclusion, at times of the socio-historical context which Bakhtin so cogently stresses. Marxism is above all things a philosophy of history, so it is hardly surprising that contemporary Marxist thought has responded to Bakhtin with enthusiasm while being hostile to the alleged ahistoricism of Jacques Derrida and the movement his work initiated, particularly what has become known as 'Deconstruction in America.'⁷⁶ I write alleged, because paradoxically it is easy to demonstrate, that while deconstruction has been denounced from all political perspectives as ahistorical,

this body of work is far more historically grounded than the structuralism of Levi-Strauss, Jakobson and the early Barthes. It is also more responsive to history than the New Criticism. In the field of Dickens studies alone Hillis Miller's deconstructionalist writings are demonstrably more critically aware of historical processes, than his earlier study of Dickens inspired by Georges Poulet.⁷⁷ The work of Miller, Harold Bloom, Geoffrey Hartman and Paul de Man has much to recommend it when considered in terms of close reading of texts. However the general conclusions drawn from these as to the impossibility of language ever referring to anything other than itself, I do not follow.⁷⁸ In England the interest of literary theorists in deconstruction has always had a historical dimension.⁷⁹ A recent collection of essays addresses this question directly: Post-structuralism and the question of History, edited by Derek Attridge and others (CUP, Cambridge, 1987). It is all too easy to respond to the call of history, without examining too closely what version of history is demanded.⁸⁰

The work of Jacques Derrida is situated in the margins between philosophy and literature. There are certainly many ways in which his texts could be read. Several commentators have recently explored his interconnections with Anglo-American and continental philosophy.⁸¹ My particular interest here is in what Derrida has to say about writing, in his readings of literary texts and in his approach to language. While Derrida works in America and France, speaking, writing, and teaching in French, German, and English, none of these languages is the mothertongue of

his land and people. Derrida was born, in 1930, to assimilated Sephardic Jewish parents in El-Biar, Algiers then a French colony. He went to France aged 19 and after hearing a radio broadcast about Camus, enrolled in the philosophy class of the Ecole Normale. In Algeria the independence movement was growing, while there was an atmosphere of racial violence. This certainly does not 'explain' his philosophy, but the particular situation in regard to national languages and culture has much to do with his attitudes to language and literature.⁸² Derrida's relation to his Jewish heritage is an important factor to consider in his writings. This goes far beyond the fragments of personal stories encapsulated in Glas (1974) and La Carte postale (1980), and impinges on his form of writing and ideas about writing. Susan Handelman in The Slayers of Moses: the Emergence of Rabbinic Interpretation in Modern Literary Theory (1982) explores a common heritage of textual exegesis in Harold Bloom, Freud and Derrida. However this leads her to neglect some differences between them. Gayatri Spivak reads Glas as an ancestral rite, a mourning of Derrida's natural father and two 'intellectual fathers', Hegel and Nietzsche.⁸³ Glas utilises a special typographical page layout, each page has a double column, the left side of which is concerned with Hegel and the right with Jean Genet. Comments, allusions, quotations and dictionary definitions are embedded in the text in different type-faces. Geoffrey Hartman comments 'It is not only hard to say whether Glas is 'criticism' or 'philosophy' or 'literature,' it is hard to affirm that it is a book.'⁸⁴ But in layout, as opposed to content, Glas is nothing new, for it scandalously resembles The Talmud and

attempts to rewrite the book of the law. Derrida forces the reader to read in non-linear graphic fashion. He is a Talmud scholar who applies himself to the texts of Western philosophy, and literary texts.

The Jewish existential philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who once taught Derrida phenomenology, was an important formative influence upon Derrida's thought. Levinas turned to existential theology to explain the absence of God from the world. He draws upon Heidegger, classical philosophy, and Rabbinical textual techniques to produce his own distinctive work of negative theology, poised between existentialism and phenomenology.⁸⁵ Negative theology may be glossed in the words of St Thomas Aquinas:

Now, because we cannot know what God is, but rather what He is not, we have no means for considering how God is, but rather how he is not.⁸⁶

From this Aquinas deduced certain theological propositions, for example: God is not a body composed of parts. Negative theology, it can be seen proceeds via negativa but is not, in itself, nihilistic. Derrida, in his paper 'Différance' describes how 'the detours, locutions, and syntax' of his own work will resemble, and at times be indistinguishable from negative theology, yet he maintains his own work is not theological.⁸⁷ Certain of Derrida's devices, such as the 'trace' appear to be adapted from Levinas, the debt to him and Derrida's critique of Levinas' work can be found in an essay 'Violence and Metaphysics' available in the Writing and Difference collection.⁸⁸ Other essays there indicate the importance of Jewish thought in Derrida's work, especially

'Ellipsis' and 'Edmond Jabes and the Question of the Book' which are signed as a Rabbi, Reb Derissa, and Reb Rida, punning versions of Derrida's name.⁸⁹

At the present time, in the Summer of 1989, there are indications that the interest of literary theorists in deconstruction is waning. It is increasingly suggested that Derrida should be read, if at all, in the context of philosophy, rather than literature.⁹⁰ Paradoxically, Derrida himself seems to be moving towards the literary, as opposed to the philosophical dimension of his work. His work is now often recognised as directly ethical and political in tone, but then Derrida himself argues that it always had been.⁹¹ One of the questions which Derrida has constantly raised is the question of genre- the professionalised demarcation dispute between disciplines.⁹² This can be used as a means of excluding awkward questions and new domains of study which professional philosophers and literary critics are often concerned to suppress. It is for these reasons that some feminists have found Derrida's ideas useful, both in the deconstruction of patriarchal discourse and in the opening up of areas of women's studies.⁹³

Some of Derrida's recent work, Glas and the series of imaginary postcards in the first section of La Carte postale, may be seen as literature, rather than as work in philosophy, though Derrida wishes to break down the traditional demarcations between 'creative writing', criticism and philosophy. Derrida also is increasingly writing on literary texts, which are usually 'difficult', Mallarme, Blanchot, Joyce,⁹⁴ Kafka, Ponge, and Celan⁹⁵. Rather as Martin

Heidegger turned to commenting on the poetry of Holderlin or Rilke as a means of creating a special philosophical space that he could not reach by analytic philosophy, Derrida examines the philosophical implications of the language of these texts. They are not explications, in the normal sense of literary criticism anymore than the meditations of Heidegger on poetry are literary criticism. Yet they are profound close readings, and the ones on Jewish subjects especially are moving in the disclosure of tragedy. Derrida's debts to Heidegger, and through him to Nietzsche are immense. Like them he is concerned to explore the grounds of language, its functions in naming and in conferring identity (both individual and national), and in the nature and implications of metaphor. Like them, Derrida frequently proceeds by the appeal to a deliberate and speculative etymology which must be regarded more as a rhetorical ploy rather than as proof of origin. But Derrida combines the speculative inquiry of Heidegger with a traditional Rabbinical sense of writing to produce an original synthesis, which engages with texts to create readings of remarkable power and originality. Derrida's attitudes to language may be said to constitute a 'negative linguistics', on a par with the negative theology written by Emmanuel Levinas. If Bakhtin constructs a dialogue between the addresser and the Other, Derrida writes from the position of the eternal Other, stereotypically the position of the Jew in occidental culture. Typical of his more recent writings is a long essay on shibboleth and circumcision which relates to poems of Paul Celan, a Jew born in Romania, who lived the latter part of his life in Paris and wrote in German.⁹⁶

Celan's difficult gnomic poetry, which is highly allusive, often deeply personal and frequently amalgamates elements of words to create neologisms, also interested Heidegger who became a friend. Heidegger used some of Celan's poems as the ground for his philosophical meditations on language, while Celan's interest in existentialism was fed back into the poetry. Heidegger's compromised behaviour during the rise to power of the National Socialists provides particular difficulties for Jewish admirers of his work. In certain poems, Celan seems to probe Heidegger's actions and his refusal to explain or apologise afterwards (Celan's relatives were almost all exterminated by the Nazis, an experience of genocide which is a theme of much of his poetry- but his friendship and interest in Heidegger and his choice of writing in German continued.⁹⁷) Derrida raises questions of 'race' and 'nationalism' in relation to Heidegger, elsewhere; in the Celan essay he is concerned with them generally.⁹⁸ But, though 'Shibboleth' has a specifically Jewish resonance, it also raises important questions about the nature of language which are shirked by orthodox linguistics. I intend to raise these in relation to my readings of Dickens. The Hebrew word 'Shibboleth' was used as a password at the crossing of the Jordan since it could not be pronounced correctly by the enemy, the Ephraimites, who would give themselves away by mispronunciation. Derrida glosses 'Shibboleth' as follows:

A Shibboleth, the word Shibboleth, if it is one, names in the broadest extension of its generality or its usage, any insignificant, arbitrary mark, for example the phonemic difference between shi and si, once it becomes discriminative and decisive, that is, divisive. This difference has no meaning in and of itself, and becomes what one must know .

how to mark and recognize if one is to get on, if, that is, one is to get over a border or the threshold of a poem, if one is to be granted asylum or the legitimate habitation of a language. And to inhabit language, one must already have a Shibboleth at one's command: it is not enough simply to understand the meaning of the word, simply to know how it should be pronounced (shi and not si, this the Ephraimites knew). One must be able to say it as it should be said. There is nothing hidden about this secret, this claim of alliance, no meaning concealed within a crypt, but it is a cipher which one must share and divide... with the other.⁹⁹

A Shibboleth is a type of différance, one of a series of terms which over the years, Derrida has fashioned, used, then abandoned in his probing of the limits of Western reason and language. Derrida classically explored the rationale of such devices in his paper Différance which was presented in 1968.¹⁰⁰ This particular liminal device was created by substituting the letter 'a' for 'e' in the spelling of the French word différence thus producing différance, which Derrida insists is neither word nor concept and so can have no essential meaning. Différance is a neographism, which is unrepresentable in speech, except by circumlocution (for example: 'I'm speaking of difference with an 'a' here'). The rules of French pronunciation determine that the sound of différance is identical to the word différence. The effect of the device can only be seen in writing. Différance is a double mark that includes within itself the two distinct meanings of the Latin differre, which in English have become two separate words: to defer and to differ. The anomalous différance is undecideable, for it cannot be resolved into what differs or what defers. This, Derrida insists, is not a game. Saussure had argued that in language there are only differences, without positive terms. (/pet/ differs from

/bet/ or /net/ for example merely because of a different initial phoneme; there is no essential meaning of the phoneme /p/ here, it merely occupies a place within the systematic network of differences which constitute language). Derrida argues that meaning is never simply present in language, but always already deferred. To defer is to put off in time, while to differ implies a distance, a separation in physical space. Derrida gave a verbal gloss to différance during a series of questions put to him in English in 1986.¹⁰¹ There he suggested that différance is at the same time both difference of kind and difference of degree, which means that it is neither one nor the other.

Différance 'is' a difference (discontinuity, alterity, heterogeneity) and also the possibility and the necessity of an economy (relay, delegation, signification, mediation, 'supplement', reappropriation) of the other as such...¹⁰²

As a simple illustration of what Derrida means one might think of the relation between an original and a translated text, or between an original text and a commentary upon that text. Each incorporates a difference of kind and of degree. Both a critical commentary and a translation may be regarded as a supplement. A supplement such as the 'a' of différance is something added, another degree, which at the same time reveals a lack, a disorder in the entity. The point is to consider the logic of any system which opposes differences in kind and differences of degree. Derrida seeks to indicate that the ability really to separate difference of kind from difference of degree would be absolute knowledge, but at the same time this is an impossible fantasy of western philosophy, for ultimately there is only différance. The

process of unpacking the logic of différance is what he termed deconstruction.¹⁰³

The exemplary mark of différance, whether Shibboleth, which discriminated Jew and Ephraimite, or circumcision which marks and divides Jew and gentile and which Derrida treats as a kind of Shibboleth has the function of dividing the sheep from the goats. The concept is clearly extendable to marks of linguistic différance such as accent which discriminate between sex, race and class. '... What one must know how to mark or recognize if one is to get on...' ¹⁰⁴. can be read as 'getting on' in the social sense. This has, as I shall show, clear relevance to the writings of Dickens, which abound in linguistic Shibboleths. In so doing, I shall graft some Derridean concepts and techniques onto the socio-historical approach to language I have adopted from Bakhtin.¹⁰⁵

Derrida's international career was launched by the publication of De la Grammatologie (Paris, 1967). The English translation, entitled Of Grammatology with a long introduction by the translator, Gayatri Spivak was published in 1976.¹⁰⁶ In this book Derrida argues that there has been a systematic prejudice in Western culture against writing which he traces from Plato, to Rousseau, Saussure and Levi-Strauss. When one speaks, one has the illusion that meaning coincides with one's utterance, but in writing, the addresser is separated from the utterance as soon as it is inscribed, while meaning arises from reading and is outside of the addresser's direct control. The first part of Of Grammatology 'Writing before the Letter' [pp. 1 -93] is a critique of attempts to produce a history of writing. It is

a revised version of a two-part essay that took its impetus from a review of three books that described aspects of the history of writing, and which was published in the journal Critique December 1965 - January 1966.¹⁰⁷ As Spivak notes, Derrida treats each of the books in order, the first describes the decipherment of non-European scripts, the time when grammatology could have opened as a discipline, but did not. The second section considers a purported psychological basis for differentiating between speech and writing, while the third examines the implications of a 'non-phonetic writing.'¹⁰⁸ Derrida takes the term grammatology from yet another book on the history of writing systems to describe his ushering in a new science of writing, as Saussure had introduced the new science of semiology, the science of signs.¹⁰⁹ In the first part of Of Grammatology one can see how thinking about the historical situation of writing and inscription focused Derrida's interests on the philosophical implications. As Spivak remarks, Derrida seemed to consider his project of a new science of writing, called Grammatology, as a way of producing a history of writing 'an immense field where hitherto one has only done preparatory work', but soon this impossible project was dropped in favour of the development of the philosophical aspects of écriture.¹¹⁰ Spivak, in her introduction, carefully places Derrida in relation to continental philosophy, Hegel, Heidegger and Nietzsche. She is puzzled as to why Derrida, the deconstructor of metaphysics, should insist on the historical inevitability of Grammatology: 'Why is the opening chapter... full of a slightly embarrassing messianic promise?'¹¹¹ She also questions why, since Derrida insists on the devaluation

of writing as a constituent of Western culture, the Orient is not also seriously considered or deconstructed, but remains as a limit to the text's knowledge.¹¹² The Jewish element in Derrida's thought is not explicitly to the fore in Of Grammatology though it saturates the essays published in Writing and Difference published in French in the same year, and which Derrida suggests ought to be read in conjunction with the larger, more programmatic book.¹¹³ As Susan Handelman points out, Écriture the term used to describe the possibilities of différance in writing may be translated as 'scripture' as well as 'writing'.¹¹⁴

I have suggested that Derrida has produced a negative linguistics, which in conjunction with the socio-historical theories of Bakhtin can best account for the rich linguistic material found in Dickens' texts. (Elaboration of what I understand to be negative linguistics will be found in Chapter Two.) The importance of graphic effects in the texts themselves has been little studied, though Dickens scholars have drawn attention to the illustrations on the covers of the monthly parts and those within the novels themselves.¹¹⁵ What I have in mind are the exploitation of typographical features for specific purposes, such as capital letters to show loud voices, or the sort of effects common in Tristram Shandy. Edgar Rosenberg describes how the manuscript of Great Expectations contains an instruction to the printer: Printer, Two white lines here. This occurs at the moment when Orlick escapes and Pip lapses into unconsciousness after their final confrontation at the sluice-house. [GE 407] The words of the next sentence are: 'After a blank, I found that

I was lying unbound...' Dickens had intended that the text should show the blank with extra white space, but all modern editions ignore this instruction. Rosenberg gives convincing reasons for its restoration as a timing device in the passage.¹¹⁶ Happily many other typographical effects were not ignored, and the Clarendon Editions make available materials which were adjusted by the printers, such as standardisation of spellings.¹¹⁷ The use of puns is a material effect of language. In Dickens they are often linked to non-standard usage. The relation between speech and writing in Dickens is a complex one, many of the ideological effects of writing are explored in the theme of illiteracy and learning to read and write. Proper names are also of importance in Dickens, the speculative etymology and signing and inscription processes examined by Derrida are pertinent here. Dickens was, I suggest, well aware of the capacity of words to 'wound' or 'bless', the ancient categories reverted to by Geoffrey Hartman in his retreat from Glas, Saving the Text. Many of Derrida's concerns appear in the language of Dickens. I have attempted to historicise these matters, by for example, examining the intertextual relationships between Dickens' non-standard verbal formations and Victorian grammars and usage books which police language use. I have not, however, sought to make page by page comparison between Derrida and Dickens, but have drawn upon Derrida's work as a source for understanding the functions and implications of the graphic elements in Dickens and as a grounding for the general proposition that communication is not transparent. The present work is not an attempt to outline a new form of literary history, for such

work would need to study the novel as a genre, its production and consumption, together with many other forms of writing. This study is a type of historical stylistics, it is of necessity extremely selective, few novelists other than Dickens are mentioned, the range of Dickens' own writing, and other non-literary writings, such as grammar books have been chosen to illustrate the theoretical points at issue. Nevertheless, such work in historical stylistics, informed by Bakhtin and Derrida can be seen as part of the New Historicism which is developing as a trend in Anglo-American literary studies.

In the next chapter, I shall consider Roman Jakobson's model of language as communication and following this explore the criticisms of Bakhtin and Derrida which lead to their respective 'sociological stylistics' and 'negative linguistics', which I use to examine the language of Dickens.

Chapter 2

Communication and Negative Linguistics

When she sought to characterise the present situation of literary studies, in 1981, Christine Brooke-Rose wrote the following:

The Jakobson diagram, in fact, has been exploded: no addresser, no addressee, no reference, no message, only (perhaps), a contact and a vast metalanguage, which is declared by Lacan not to be one: Il n'y a pas de métalangage, plus aphoristiquement, il n'y a pas d'Autre de l'Autre¹

The diagram she referred to was set out by Roman Jakobson in his 'Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics' delivered at a conference on style in language, at Indiana University in 1958.² In this paper Jakobson gave his classic exposition of the six functions of language, relating each of these to a corresponding constitutive factor of verbal communication; in so doing he attempted to define the relation between the study of literature and the study of language. The impact of this analysis on literary studies has been immense. As an instance 'poetics' was then almost unknown in Anglo-American criticism. Now it is an entire discipline. But, Brooke-Rose's phrase 'The Jakobson diagram ... has been exploded' is ambiguous. A theory is said to be exploded, when it is brought into disrepute by showing it to be baseless. The theory is destroyed and remains purely of historical interest. But a diagram or drawing is 'exploded' by showing

the components separated as if by explosion, but in the same relative positions. An 'exploded' drawing of an engine, for example, would show how all the separate components fit together to make the whole unit. It is not the case that the heterogeneous work termed deconstruction has brought Jakobson's theory of language into disrepute by showing it to be baseless. Jakobson's schema remains the classical model of language as communication; it is surely as Annette Lavers claims, 'still valid for practical, transitive, conscious and voluntary communication, which is based on a logic of identity.'³ It remains, as Newtonian physics remains, practically useful for most circumstances, despite the development of quantum mechanics. Indeed deconstruction has no explanation of language of its own, for it depends on Jakobson's model as a parasite upon its host.⁴

In an interview Jacques Derrida described the problems of telecommunication (etymologically: 'communication from afar') that he sought to unravel in La Carte postale de Socrate à Freud et au-delà (Paris, 1980):

...what is a destination? an addressee? what is the identity of the sender? of the receiver? what is correspondence? what remains, what is destroyed in correspondence?⁵

It is a moot point whether Jakobson's diagram is an adequate explanation of the process at work here, when I cite part of an answer Derrida gave in an interview eight years ago, to which I was not a party. In what sense, does Derrida address a message to me here? Or to you who are at this moment reading 'his' words which I have selected, cited and rewritten? It is even unclear in which language the

interview was conducted! The written citation, or allusion, now seems fundamental to novelistic discourse, so the question of what is lost if writing is seen as a message sent from addresser to addressee is crucial.⁶ But it is indisputable that a knowledge of Jakobson's diagram is required to understand these questions; therefore the diagram remains even as it is exploded. Before examining the linguistics of the citation, of writing and the novel, it is useful to explode Jakobson's diagram, like a photographic enlargement known colloquially as a 'blow-up', so that its features and their ideological presuppositions can be made clear.

A present day reading of Jakobson's classic paper, with the now vast secondary literature in mind tends to produce something of a shock; for the diagram and its exposition occupy only a small part of the paper, which is mainly concerned with the phonological and syntactic analysis of verse. It is not my purpose to consider the main body of the paper, which is entirely characteristic of Jakobson's formalist orientation as a literary scholar, but to analyze the diagram and its accompanying programme. The essence of this is given in two extraordinarily condensed paragraphs.

Language must be investigated in all the variety of its functions. Before discussing the poetic function we must define its place among the other functions of language. An outline of these functions demands the precise survey of the constitutive factors in any speech event, in any verbal communication. The ADDRESSER sends a MESSAGE to the ADDRESSEE. To be operative the message requires a CONTEXT referred to ('referent' in another, somewhat ambiguous, nomenclature), seizable by the addressee, and either verbal or capable of being verbalised; a CODE fully, or at least partially, common to the addresser and addressee (or in other words, to the encoder and

decoder of the message); and, finally, a CONTACT, a physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication. All these factors inalienably involved in verbal communication may be schematized as follows:

	CONTEXT	
ADDRESSER	MESSAGE	ADDRESSEE
	CONTACT	
	CODE	

Each of these six factors determines a different function of language. Although we distinguish six basic aspects of language, we could, however, hardly find verbal messages that would fulfill only one function. The diversity lies not in a monopoly of some one of these several functions but in a different hierarchical order of functions. The verbal structure of a message depends primarily on the predominant function. But even though a set (einstellung) towards the referent, an orientation toward the CONTEXT - briefly the so-called REFERENTIAL, 'denotive', 'cognitive' function- is the leading task of numerous messages, the accessory participation of the other functions in such messages must be taken into account by the observant linguist.⁷

Each constitutive factor has a corresponding function:⁸

	REFERENTIAL	
EMOTIVE	POETIC	CONATIVE
	PHATIC	
	METALINGUAL	

It can be seen that each function is mapped on to the scheme of factors; in the secondary literature it is usual to find both diagrams combined:

CONTEXT

referential

ADDRESSER

MESSAGE

ADDRESSEE

emotive

poetic

conative

CONTACT

phatic

CODE

metalingual

Following Jakobson's own exposition and selecting from his examples of illustration, the various functions and their associated factors run as follows. The EMOTIVE function is set to the ADDRESSER and 'aims a direct expression of the speaker's attitude toward what he is speaking about.'⁹ Interjections, for example, the suction clicks in tut! tut! display this function in its pure form, but it is present to some extent in all utterances. Orientation toward the ADDRESSEE, the CONATIVE function is illustrated by vocatives and imperatives, for example the command Drink! The set for CONTACT OR PHATIC function serves to establish, prolong, or discontinue communication - for example Are you listening? The set for CODE is performed by the METALINGUAL function, this is used whenever the addresser or addressee need to check up on whether they are using the same code; example: I don't follow you- what do you mean? The POETIC function is set towards the MESSAGE. Jakobson gives as example the electoral slogan I like Ike. With the poetic function, Jakobson introduces his ideas of metaphor and metonymy which are fully expressed in an earlier paper 'Two Aspects of

Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances' (1956).¹⁰ In the later paper, the phraseology is different, but the central concept remains the same:

The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination.¹¹

This poetic function has a privileged place in Jakobson's thought, which is not shared by the other functions. The problem of reference, the central question of western philosophy of language is barely indicated. Next to nothing is said of the REFERENTIAL function. One is justified in assuming that how humans use language to talk about the world was either self-evident or intellectually uninteresting to Jakobson, or that these issues were seen as irrelevant to the 'Style in Language' conference. Conversely the remaining nineteen pages of the paper are devoted to the poetic function- a technicist study of metrics and syllabification in English and Slavic verse. While in theory, Jakobson will admit there are few 'verbal messages that would fulfil only one function' ¹² in practice he tends to concentrate on detailed analysis of the poetic function of lyric verse. As a literary scholar Jakobson remained faithful to the ideals of Russian Formalism that he had helped formulate in his youth; poetry should be uncontaminated by worldly concerns and the study of poetry should be concerned with its special language and structures.

Rather than being an original conception of the workings of language, the model is a brilliant synthesis of many ideas from different intellectual provenance;¹³ Karl Bühler's three factor schema of expression, affection and representation,¹⁴

Malinowski's phatic communion,¹⁵ the information science of Cherry, and of Shannon and Weaver¹⁶ are combined and recast with Jakobson's own interests in Russian Formalism and Futurist verse.¹⁷ The model of language outlined here was long in its gestation. Critique of the model can be divided roughly into three kinds, the linguistic, the philosophical and the ideological, there is naturally some overlap between these.

The criticism voiced by the linguists M. A. K. Halliday,¹⁸ Roger Fowler,¹⁹ and Mary Louise Pratt,²⁰ while refusing special status to the poetic, retain the model of communication between addresser and addressee. Mikhail Bakhtin's criticism of an early version of the model, and the criticism of Julia Kristeva²¹ is of a different order. It questions the idea of communication between fixed positions of addresser and addressee, arguing that these positions are instituted dynamically by the act of communication. (The influence of Bakhtin upon Kristeva's early work was considerable.)

Mary Louise Pratt cogently argues that the opposition between poetic and non-poetic language is a wholly inadequate foundation upon which to construct a linguistic theory of literature, tracing such an opposition from Aristotle's Poetics through Romanticism, Neo-Kantian aesthetics to the rise of scientific description. (One should add that Jakobson did not claim to provide such a linguistic theory of literature, and the poetic function can operate in any utterance, not just the literary.) Formalist theorists such as Viktor Shklovski who asserted that poetic language was of

a different order from everyday communication did not test this empirically by examining ordinary language. The roles of metre, rhyme, syllabification, metaphor and all the other devices supposedly characteristic of poetic language were never seriously considered in extra-literary material.²² Because Jakobson did introduce such material into his work, the contradictions inherent in his definitions are foregrounded. For example it is certainly not by the absence of the projection principle that Jakobson distinguishes propaganda 'I like Ike' and 'applied verse' mnemonic lines like 'Thirty days hath September' or versified medieval laws from 'true poetry'. Jonathan Culler in an examination of Jakobson's analysis of Baudelaire's 'Spleen' convincingly demonstrated that the supposedly objective description of parallelisms was far from exhaustive and that Jakobson ignored patterns which would contradict his argument.²³ The machinery of linguistic analysis is preceded by assumptions of relevance and taste, rather than itself producing an objective reading of the poem to which all readers will attest. After this, Culler proceeds to discover instances of the workings of the poetic function in a page of Jakobson's own prose.²⁴

Mary Louise Pratt also argues that there is no single set of linguistic properties in terms of which the six functions of language are distinguished and related. The emotive, metalingual and referential function are distinguished from each other by means of subject matter, they carry information about the addresser's inner state, the code and the context respectively. However, the phatic function is defined by the

speaker's intentions to establish, continue or break communication. On the other hand the conative is defined by a logical criterion- imperatives lack truth value, combined with some grammatical features and its referent. The clarity of the diagram masks its hodge-podge of category definitions. Moreover there are several important types of structure which the model does not attempt to distinguish, any differences between interrogative and declarative, or interrogative and imperative for example.²⁵

The philosopher Stephen Gaukroger makes some interesting points about Jakobson's model from the standpoint of linguistic philosophy.²⁶ Gaukroger considers ways in which communication can fail according to Jakobson: if the 'context' is not 'seizable' by the addressee, if the code is not common to addresser and addressee, if there is loss of contact between them. Gaukroger aptly comments:

The problem is... it is difficult to conceive of what full communication would be like other than on the model of a monologue. In the monologue, i.e. where addresser and addressee are identical, there is a guarantee as regards code, contact... and the addressee's grasp of the message is the same as that of the addresser. But this leaves open the question of what the addresser's grasp of the message consists in. To argue that the addresser grasps the message wholly in virtue of his or her being the originator of the message would be disastrous, since it would have to suppose some pre-linguistic privileged access to the message: as if language were something that only enters the picture when one wants to communicate one's thoughts to others.²⁷

It is Derrida's point that most philosophy of language, and linguistics has supposed exactly that. Questions of 'full' communication, the identity of addresser and addressee, and

monologue are central to the critique of an early version of the communication model made by Mikhail Bakhtin.

Tzvetan Todorov, in the course of his excellent book on Bakhtin²⁸ contrasts Bakhtin's theory of language with Jakobson's by juxtaposition of Jakobson's diagram with a schema Todorov has himself constructed from his reading of Bakhtin:²⁹

	<u>Bakhtin</u>			<u>Jakobson</u>	
	object			context	
speaker	utterance	listener	sender	message	receiver
	intertext			contact	
	language			code	

This is interesting, but as Todorov admits, his Bakhtin schema 'must be handled carefully', ³⁰ for Bakhtin is no Umberto Eco or A. J. Greimas; he has no love for the structural diagram. In examining Todorov's version of the Jakobson diagram, it is noticeable that Todorov, or his translator, has been rather careless and relabelled Jakobson's addresser- addressee as sender- receiver. Since Todorov goes on to make points about the importance of terminology, it is unlikely that this change was deliberate, but perhaps the result of working from memory. Karl Bühler's axiomatic scheme did use the terms 'Sender- Receiver'. It may be that Jakobson uses them himself in the early versions of the theory that would be known to Bakhtin. But it is important to recognise that in his paper 'Linguistics and Poetics', Jakobson uses the general semiotic terms taken from

information science. This difference in terminology is not trivial, for it demonstrates that the Jakobson diagram is not timeless and universal as its author supposed, but on the contrary bears the traces of its historical emergence. Addresser and addressee mark the diagram in relation to the heady days of cybernetics and the optimistic expectation that machine translation would soon be practicable. Jakobson's interest in linguistic universals should be read in the intellectual context of the middle and late 1950's at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.³¹

Todorov then makes some points about terminology: Jakobson gives independent status to contact, which is missing from Bakhtin. Bakhtin, though, includes the relation to other utterances, which Todorov, following Kristeva, terms the intertext. Jakobson's terms are semiotic rather than linguistic. Todorov then explains that there is a fundamental opposition between the two models, for the concept of language is quite different. Jakobson's diagram describes 'the constitutive factors of any speech event, of any act in verbal communication.'³² But Bakhtin sees two distinct 'events' which demand two separate disciplines; linguistics and translinguistics. The latter is the field of study that Bakhtin made his own, an area which would in modern terms be pragmatics, discourse theory, sociolinguistics and textuality.

In linguistics, one begins with words and grammatical rules, and one ends with sentences. In translinguistics, one starts with sentences and the context of enunciation and one obtains utterances. Thus to formulate propositions concerning 'any verbal event', an event of language as well as discourse, would be in Bakhtin's perspective a useless enterprise.³³

Todorov then argues that Bakhtin's focus upon utterance, as opposed to 'message', language as opposed to 'code' is a rejection of the encoding/decoding process of the communication model. According to the communication model a sender has a pre-existing message to transmit, encodes it (into morse for example), the message is transmitted and the receiver decodes it. For Bakhtin, discourse institutes the speaker and listener with respect to each other, they do not exist in such a capacity before the utterance. Language is something other than a code.³⁴ Todorov then reproduces part of Medvedev and Bakhtin's The Formal Method of Literary Scholarship (1928), which criticises the concepts of language formulated by the Formalists, of which the young Roman Jakobson was an active member.³⁵

What is transmitted is inseparable from the forms, manners, and concrete conditions of the transmission. The Formalists presuppose tacitly, however, in their interpretation, an entirely predetermined and fixed communication, and an equally fixed transmission. This could be expressed schematically as follows: there are two members of society, A (the author) and B (the reader); the social relations between them are, for the time being, unchangeable and fixed; we also have a ready-made message X, which must simply be handed over by A to B. In this ready-made message X, there is distinguished the 'what' ('content') and the 'how' ('form'), literary discourse being characterized by the 'objective of expression' ('how') [This is a quotation from Jakobson's first published text - Todorov]. The proposed schema is radically wrong. In reality, the relations between A and B are in a state of permanent formation and transformation; they continue to alter in the very process of communication. Nor is there a ready-made message X. It takes form in the process of communication between A and B. Nor is it transmitted from the first to second, but constructed between them, like an ideological bridge; it is constructed in the process of their interaction.³⁶

Todorov concludes his comparison of the two Russian linguists by quoting Bakhtin in 1968:

Semiotics prefers to deal with the transmission of a ready-made message by means of a ready-made code, whereas in living speech messages are, strictly speaking, created for the first time in the process of transmission, and ultimately there is no code.³⁷

At the Indiana 'Style in Language' conference, Rene Wellek responded to Jakobson's 'Closing Statement' by arguing that the terms of the diagram would need adjustment for the purpose of literary studies. The person of the writer should not be confused with the 'poetic self' or narrator: 'The "I" of the poet must not of course be confused with his private personality. Even the "I" of a lyric poem is dramatic.' ³⁸ But Wellek seems not to have grasped the message of Jakobson's complex paper, for Jakobson goes far beyond Wellek's point in discussing ambiguity as a feature of the poetic function.

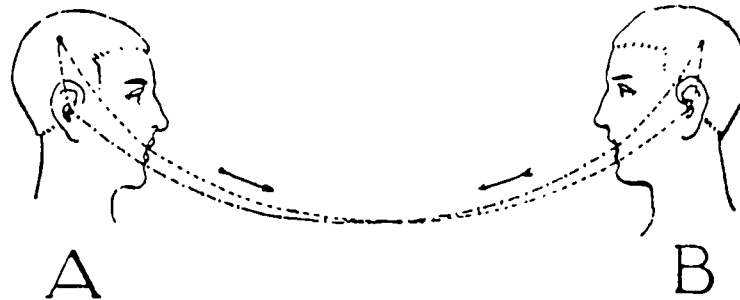
Not only the message itself but also its addresser and addressee become ambiguous. Besides the author and the reader, there is the 'I' of the lyrical hero or of the fictitious storyteller and the 'you' or 'thou' of the alleged addressee of dramatic monologues, supplications and epistles.... Virtually any poetic message is a quasi-quoted discourse with all those peculiar, intricate problems which 'speech within speech' offers to the linguist.³⁹

What is remarkable here is that Jakobson has hit on the substance of Bakhtin's interest in the hierarchy of discourses, of 'speech within speech' in the novel and post-structuralist analysis of the subject-in-process, without realising the devastating effect that this analysis has upon the neat diagrammatic representation of a message being sent

from addresser to addressee. Once one allows 'The double-sensed message [which] finds correspondence in a split addresser, in a split addressee, and besides in a split reference...' ⁴⁰ one is left not with a poetics, but in Kristeva's words 'the ruin of a poetics' ⁴¹ Jakobson's ruin of his own diagram is buried amid a technical study of metrics and syllabification in verse, so it is hardly surprising Rene Wellek overlooked these thoughts of Jakobson's when hearing the paper read aloud. ⁴² With hindsight, one can read Jakobson in the light of Adorno's aphorism: 'Only those thoughts are true which fail to understand themselves.' ⁴³ For Jakobson never seized the message of his own words. In contrast to most other theories of language, Jakobson has little to say about the truth of discourse. Apart from distinguishing between declarative and imperative sentences, the truth or falsehood of a message does not appear relevant to the analysis. It is hardly accidental that there is no developed rhetoric of lies, deception, dissemblance, irony, or sarcasm within linguistics. One must turn to literary studies for an analysis of these functions of language.

Before considering some radical critiques of Jakobson's theory which question the identity of the subject and the nature of the sign, it will be useful to examine what may well be the progenitor of Jakobson's diagram. Early in de Saussure's Cours de linguistique générale there is a diagram which is intended to show the place of linguistic structure (la langue) within the facts of language (le langage).

Pour trouver dans l'ensemble du langage la sphère qui correspond à la langue, il faut se placer devant l'acte individuel qui permet de reconstituer le circuit de la parole.* Cet acte suppose au moins deux individus ; c'est le minimum exigible pour que le circuit soit complet. Soient donc deux personnes, A et B, qui s'entretiennent :



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In this tête-à-tête, language has been reduced to a dialogue, a face-to-face verbal interaction between two men. A metaphor drawn from electricity or telephony is used to show communication from brain A to brain B via 'le circuit de la parole'- the 'speech circuit'. This metaphor facilitated Jakobson's thinking about human communication in terms of morse encoding and decoding, then to incorporate the terms of information science. Saussure had thought about language in terms of a contemporary scientific invention (the notes for the Cours were written between 1906-11), much as it is now common to speak of the brain as a computer. While such metaphors may be indispensable, the analogies may conceal more than they reveal, especially if they become so accepted that they are not perceived to be metaphorical. There are

two consequences of Saussure's diagram. First, language is depicted essentially as speech; secondly, the social aspects of language are reduced to a dialogue between individuals. Both these conditions are replicated in Jakobson's diagram which was intended to show 'the constitutive factors in any speech event, in any act of verbal communication'.⁴⁵ [My emphasis] Saussure, the brilliant philologist, saw philology as a constraint upon the development of modern linguistics, 'the spoken word' was 'language's natural sphere of existence',⁴⁶ writing was a dangerous snare, a disguise of language.⁴⁷ He pointed to Franz Bopp's failure to distinguish between letters and sounds as evidence of philologists being led astray by writing.⁴⁸ Bakhtin in Marxism and the Philosophy of Language is equally scathing about 'the study of defunct, alien languages preserved in written monuments.'⁴⁹ Nietzsche too, in 'Wir Philologen' sees progress as an overcoming of the necrophilia and moribund state of philology. It may well be that the relation between the study of language and the study of literature cannot be properly understood until the historical base of linguistics within the ruins of philology is considered. This is the key to understanding Bakhtin's as well as Saussure's attitude to the living spoken word, while they themselves continued to work with the dead letters of written material. Derrida's Of Grammatology drew attention to Saussure's attitude to writing and the symptomatic function he saw in opposing the dead letters of writing to the presence of living speech within the metaphysics of western culture. In overthrowing philology, both Saussure and Bakhtin seem to have lost sight of the fact that textual commentary and the decipherment of

language deals with written material separated from the voice of the originating author. However, in the endless textuality of deconstruction the discipline of philology can be said to have exacted a terrible revenge. Nietzsche's warnings of the evils of philological method seem painfully timely for present literary studies.

After describing Jakobson's model of the communication situation, I will now consider its inverse, which I term the model of Negative Linguistics. Jakobson began his 'Closing Statement' with the assertion that 'fortunately scholarly and political conferences have nothing in common'⁵⁰ Success at a political conference, he contended, depended on general agreement of the participants. The use of votes and vetoes is alien to scholarly discussion, according to Jakobson, where disagreement generally proves more productive than agreement. 'Disagreement discloses antinomies and tensions within the field discussed and calls for novel exploration.'⁵¹ He likens this to the exploration of Antarctica, where international experts attempt to map the great unknown, discovering the obstacles for the explorer. There is no mention of mineral rights, or military strategy in this analogy. But, despite his nod to the productivity of disagreement, agreement is central to Jakobson's concept of communication. The ideal of being a member of an international scholarly community above the concerns of politics has little to do with impartial linguistic research, but a great deal to do with the institutional position of Roman Jakobson during the upheavals of European politics in the Twentieth Century.⁵² Born in Moscow, 1896, he was a

founder member of the Moscow Linguistic Circle, active in the Formalist group OPOJAZ, was associated with Futurist poets and avant-garde painters. He left Russia for Czechoslovakia in 1920. There he worked with Prince N. S. Trubetzkoy on phonology. In 1926 with Vilem Mathesius and others, he founded the Prague Linguistic Circle. The Nazi invasion in 1939 caused Jakobson to flee via Scandinavia to the United States. There in New York, he taught at the Ecole Libre des Hautes Etudes, a Free French and Belgium University, supported by the New School for Social Research. Thereafter he held chairs at Columbia, Harvard and MIT, teaching linguistics and slavic languages. Jakobson left Russia just at the time when Formalism was beginning to be attacked as incompatible with historical materialism.⁵³ No doubt Jakobson saw which way the wind was blowing. As an emigre, Jakobson separated from the land of his mother-tongue. His erstwhile Formalist companions either recanted or were suppressed. From Jakobson's point of view, politics had a negative effect upon scholarship and art, hence his stress on the separation of these domains. The search for linguistic universals can be seen as an attempt to abolish conflict by finding common ground. The importance of Hegelian synthesis in Jakobson's work is brought out by the following passage from a speech on 'Language and Culture' delivered at the end of his career.

What is needed in order to grasp the language of another? - One must have a keen feeling of intelligibility, an intuition of solidarity between speaker and listener, and their joint belief in the capability of the message to go through.... If one longs for communication with his fellow man, the first step toward mutual comprehension is ensured. Because what is language? Language is the overcoming of isolation in space and time.

Language is a struggle against isolationism. And this fight occurs not only within the limits of an ethnic language, where people try to adjust to each other, and to understand each other within the bounds of family, town, or country; a similar striving also takes place on a bilingual or multilingual, international scale. One feels a powerful desire to understand each other.⁵⁴

However, while Jakobson spoke and wrote in the same Russian language as the authorities in the USSR, during his exile, it was not language considered purely as langue which held him apart, but the place of his intellectual work within the political situation. The institutional place Jakobson spoke from was crucial to the 'reception' of his 'messages'. Jakobson performed his scholarly work in five or six languages other than Russian. No doubt he wanted to reach an international community of linguists, but he was also constrained to do so, to participate in any intellectual communication about language and literature. After the suppression of the Formalists under Stalin, Jakobson's work was not part of communication (at least openly) among scholars of literature and language in the Soviet Union.⁵⁵ It would have been impossible for Jakobson to have remained in Moscow or Prague and still have written in the same way about language. As we have seen his contemporary, Mikhail Bakhtin (born 1895) had a very different career as a linguist interested in literature and adopted a very different strategy of writing and philosophy of language.⁵⁶

Tzvetan Todorov, himself a Bulgarian emigre, acutely observed in his book on Bakhtin, that 'meaning (communication) implies community'⁵⁷ The function of language in social bonding is conveyed well by etymology: communal, commune, communication,

communism, communion and community are cognate, having the root of their stem in common Middle English from Old French comum from Latin communis.⁵⁸ Any common, shared language holds its position not just by common consent, but more usually through processes of hegemony - alliances of interests, and sometimes through direct force. The unity of a national language and the unity of sharing a common language often arise through power negotiations or acts of violence. The fate of Celtic languages in the British Isles is a case in point. While on the micro-political level, the phrase 'they speak another language', means a difference of position and attitude within speakers of a single national language.

There are two fundamental omissions from the communication model of language. Jean-François Lyotard expresses them precisely, though they are now the common currency of post-structuralist thought.⁵⁹ Messages have different forms and effects depending on their status as speech acts - whether they denote, prescribe, evaluate, perform etcera. Reducing this to the communication of information privileges the system's own interests and norms. It is a mere reification of the status quo. As Colin MacCabe correctly points out, Jakobson seems to assume that langue functions at the level of meaning.⁶⁰ Saussure certainly assumed this, employing a series of convoluted arguments about language being a social contract, to do so.⁶¹ Being born human means that the infant will participate in language. A voluntary or involuntary 'refusal' to produce or understand spoken language will result in the asylum, while in contemporary western society

non-participation in writing or reading is likely to lead to the reformatory, or at the least to an existence of marginality.

The second fundamental omission of the communication model is that the crucial agonistic function of language is lost. Being united to someone through a common language implies that others are excluded. The social bonding of groups works through the exclusion of outsiders as much as through a common language within the group. Jacques Lacan, whose experience of founding a school of psychoanalysis notorious for its recondite terminology perhaps conferred a particular insight into intra-group jargon, observed:

Human language... constitutes a communication in which the sender receives his own message back from the receiver in an inverted form....Furthermore when you congratulate yourself on having met someone who speaks the same language as you do, you do not mean that you meet with him in the discourse of everybody, but that you are united to him by a special kind of speech.⁶²

In the transference of the analytic situation, the analysand receives her own message back from the analyst in a reinterpreted form. The communication between analyst and analysand is peculiarly uneven in the structure of power relations, and this has attracted much critical comment. Perhaps the most forceful is that of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: 'Say it's Oedipus or you'll get a slap in the face.'⁶³ Deleuze and Guattari argue that the analyst imposes the structure of the Oedipus complex upon the patient's desire. To communicate, the patient must accept, her only strategy of last resort is to break off the analysis. It is arguable that the analytic situation, a

discourse between Master and Slave, the empowered and the powerless, is generalisable to many forms of social interaction, doctor- patient, boss- worker, teacher-pupil. Psychoanalysis is not a special case, but merely an acute example of the power relationship between addresser and addressee. One might well argue that Alexandre Kojève's interpretation of the Master - Slave relation in Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit should be the model for the function of language in society.⁶⁴ However, to do so would lapse into regarding communication as an act between individuals, rather than a social process of groups. It is also too pessimistic a view, since it cannot account for the subtle ways in which messages can be ignored, subverted or resisted by the addressee. Power in most social interaction may appear as both a positive and a negative force.⁶⁵

The Course in General Linguistics as published (Saussure of course had nothing to do with this), ends with a 'fundamental thesis':

The only true object of study in linguistics is the language, considered in itself and for its own sake. ⁶⁶

As a life-long Formalist, Jakobson held to this. Since he considered poetics to be an essential part of general linguistics, literature too could be studied for its own sake. However, the study of the social functions of language demands a wider frame than pure linguistics. Felix Guattari puts the issue well in his Molecular Revolution:

The difficulty one comes up against, the moment one tries to grapple with any social reality - be it language, madness or anything connected with any real process of desiring production - is that one is never dealing with individuals. In as much as

linguistics... has been satisfied to define its field in terms of communication among individuals, it has totally missed the coercive and integrative functions of language. Linguistics only starts to free itself from bourgeois ideology when it studies the problems arising from connotation, context, the implicit and all the transactions of language that fall outside this abstract relations between individuals.⁶⁷

While one may doubt that it is useful to regard 'bourgeois ideology' as a homogeneous totality, this passage brings together the interests of Bakhtin and those of Derrida, suggesting how one group of theories might be read in terms of another. The coercive and integrative functions of language omitted by the communication model correspond to Bakhtin's centrifugal and centripetal forces at work within language.⁶⁸ Guattari suggests how we can read these as political and cultural, rather than metaphysical forces somehow generated by the system itself. Bakhtin tends to humanise discourse into a dialogue of voices. As we have seen, what Bakhtin meant by voice is a problem in itself, but his continual insistence on dialogue tends to neglect the linguistic structures of group and social behaviour. Guattari's focus on institutional power systems is thus a valuable corrective. Voloshinov regarded a book as 'a verbal performance in print.'⁶⁹ But this ignores the problems of textuality taken up by Derrida; 'connotation, the context, the implicit', to refer back to Guattari. Guattari's programme then provides a means of politicising Derrida's strategies of deconstruction in a more straightforward manner than his own practice. Specifically, to examine the coercive and integrative functions of language, one needs to consider

language as ~~communication~~, x-communication, cross-communication, non-communication, ex-communication.

The device of writing ~~communication~~ has the effect of cancelling it, even as it is preserved, for it is necessary to retain Jakobson's model, if only to deconstruct it. Bakhtin saw the need to preserve linguistics, even as he transgressed its boundaries in the development of translinguistics. It must be recognised that though Jakobson's model is inadequate for a representation of the function of language in society, it is essential to retain the basic elements of the encoding/ decoding process to explain how language works at all. It is possible for humans to communicate with each other only because there is a shared overlap of common codes. Language is not a personal phenomenon, but a collective, inter-subjective process. Code-switching, bi-lingualism, multi-lingualism, and the merging of codes in pidgin and creole should be seen as the normal state of language, rather than exceptional.⁷⁰ This is a much more diverse and heterogeneous process than appears from the conceptualising of language as ultimately a single code, like Morse, or the binary digits of computer machine code.

If language is seen as communication, then non-communication is regarded as failure. The context is not seizable by the addressee, or the code is not common to addresser and addressee, or contact is lost; these result in the message failing to be received, the meaning failing to get across. As Stephen Gaukroger noticed, it is the merit of Jakobson's diagram that it can explain loss of communication; but

paradoxically it is hard to envisage full communication except as a monologue.⁷¹

If language is treated not as a code common to all, not as a totality, but as a collective assemblage of 'dialects, patois, slangs [and] special languages' as Deleuze and Guattari suggest,⁷² then it is easier to see the function of communication in what Bakhtin terms the polyphony of different voices. ~~Communication~~ becomes, then, not a flaw in the code or noise in the circuit, a misunderstanding or a block, but as much a function of language as communication. ~~Communication~~ involves ideological difference between addresser and addressee, who 'do not speak the same language.' The intended addressee may deny that the message applies to her, may translate the ostensible meaning into her own terms, for example a politician's message 'in the national interest' may be understood as a particular sectional interest.⁷³ This is not a failure of communication, the message has been understood only too well! Messages given in a dominant code may be refused, or they may be subverted by willful misunderstanding, by, for example, following what is intended as a figurative instruction, in a literal manner. Where there is power there is resistance, Foucault reminds us.⁷⁴ 'Full' communication is often understood as identification with the position of the addresser. To refuse identification is to refuse communication. Dis-identification is a form of displacement which moves the identity of the subject from any fixed position. It is the form of identification most often

encountered in reading literature, where messages are both messages and the representation of messages.

It would be helpful, at this stage to recapitulate the main points of argument and situate this chapter within the context of the study as a whole. I have examined the Jakobson diagram in some detail because it classically describes language as communication. Historically it has been perhaps the most important paper in linguistics as applied to literature. As I have argued, Jakobson's paper was a brilliant synthesis of many diverse strands of thought about literature and language. The Jakobson diagram has a classic status, and as Annette Lavers suggested, remains valid in many circumstances of 'practical, transitive, conscious and voluntary communication... based on a logic of identity.'⁷⁵

However, both the 'translinguistics' of Bakhtin and the deconstructive writings of Derrida have sought to question the communication model. I have attempted to combine aspects of both Bakhtin and Derrida's thought in an anti-model. This is parasitic upon the communication model, for it attempts to describe language as excommunication, cross-communication, non-communication. As negative theology proceeds by asking what God is not, so negative linguistics proceeds by questioning what linguistic communication is not. It is a linguistics for the absence of communication. Negative linguistics questions the idea of communication between fixed positions of addresser and addressee and instead argues that these positions are instituted dynamically by the act of utterance. It is difficult to envisage what full

communication could consist of, other than as a monologue. For Bakhtin, language is heteroglossia, a diversity of voices. There is ultimately no common language or common code to which it can be reduced. Post-structuralism has explored the agonistic functions of language as division and struggle. To be united to one group of people by means of a 'common language' means that others are excluded. Language is a collection of Derridian shibboleths, which are decisive because they are discriminatory and divisive.⁷⁶ Contrary to the implications of the Jakobson diagram, language is not a personal matter between individuals, but a collective, inter-subjective process. Multi-lingualism, multi-dialectism, the merging of 'codes' in pidgin and creole should be seen as the normal state of language, rather than as exceptional. To understand the social nature of language one needs to consider the implicit, the context and connotation, above all what divides as well as communicates.

The importance of 'Negative Linguistics' for reading Dickens lies in the fact that his language is heterogeneous and ultimately cannot be reduced to a common code. However, the idea that language is communication has governed most critical commentary upon Dickens' style. His 'deviations' from the codes of Standard English have often been deplored. It is my contention that Bakhtin and Derrida provide an excellent means of reading Dickens, because he was implicitly concerned with many of the same linguistic processes that they examine.

Chapter 3

Heteroglossia and Negative Linguistics in Dickens

It will be recalled that Bakhtin regards language as heteroglossia, a system of contending voices. This state is subject to two opposing forces, centripetal and centrifugal, which respectively centralise and decenter language.¹ Attempts to unify the diversity of language by producing prescriptive grammars isolating a standard national language are the effect of centripetal force, as the rulers and elite seek to make particular forms and dialects the norm. On the other hand, as Bakhtin argues in his study of the language of Rabelais, the constantly changing language of the streets and markets, an arena of slang and back-chat where words do not have their ostensible meanings, but hide behind masks, is the result of the destabilising trend within language.² Bakhtin does not confine his analysis to language alone, but relates it to social organisation:

We are taking language not as a system of abstract grammatical categories, but rather language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as world-view, even as a concrete opinion, insuring a maximum of mutual understanding in all spheres of ideological life. Thus a unitary language gives expression to forces working toward concrete verbal and ideological unification and centralization, which develop in vital connection with the processes of sociopolitical and cultural centralization.³

Standard languages and official discourses then seek to establish hegemony over the other dialects and voices which are raised against them, but this hegemony can never be absolute. Bakhtin views linguistics, philosophy of language and stylistics as forces in the service of centralisation, for they have sought to find unity in diversity.⁴ He is therefore opposed to stylistics which seeks to define a unified literary language and within that a unified style of a particular author, on political as well as methodological grounds. Stylistics becomes the study of private craftsmanship, ignoring:

...the social life of discourse outside the artist's study, discourse in the open spaces of public square, streets, cities and villages, of social groups, generations and epochs.⁵

Traditionally stylistics, therefore, took lyric poetry as its exemplary text, and tended to view the novel as a quasi-artistic genre, due to its mixture of styles. In the 1920's, Bakhtin notes, stylistics began to apply itself to novels, but with little success, since the isolatable concept of literary language is foreign to the genre. The novel then became the acid test for stylistics and Bakhtin argues that it should have led to a questioning of the entire basis of stylistic analysis.

Therefore proper theoretical recognition and illumination could not be found for the specific feel for language and discourse that one gets in stylizations... in parodies and in various forms of verbal masquerade, "not talking straight," and in the more complex artistic forms for the organization of contradiction, forms that orchestrate their themes by means of language - in all characteristic and profound models of novelistic prose, in Grimmelshausen, Cervantes, Rabelais, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne and others.⁶

My purpose in the present chapter, is to show how Dickens may be appended to this list (indeed Bakhtin himself briefly considers Little Dorrit later in 'Discourse in the Novel').⁷ More importantly, the applications of traditional stylistic analysis, which attempt to define a unified Dickensian style, or separate the literary language of individual characters without relating these to extra-novelistic discourses are impoverished when compared to Bakhtinian 'sociological stylistics.'⁸ Parody, 'not talking straight' and verbal masquerade are characteristics of Dickensian prose, but these cannot be effectively examined within the category of a 'Dickensian World' alone, without reference to such extra-literary discourses as law, street language and prescriptive grammar.

Dickens' style has often been judged by the yard-stick of a refined literary language derived from the grammar and vocabulary characteristic of formal written prose. Writing six years after Dickens' death, Anthony Trollope, whilst paying tribute to his popularity, disapproved of his prose style:

Of Dickens's style it is impossible to speak in praise. It is jerky, ungrammatical, and created by himself in defiance of rules To readers who have taught themselves to regard language, it must therefore be unpleasant.... No young novelist should ever dare to imitate the style of Dickens. If such a one wants a model for his language, let him take Thackeray.⁹

The recognition of the 'inimitable' invention of Dickens as a novelist has often been accompanied by disparagement of his prose style and it is still true that the novels of Dickens are admired, in some quarters, with reservations about their

language. The respected French Dickensian scholar Sylvere Monod has censured Dickens for using ungrammatical language. In Dickens the Novelist (1968), Monod criticised the style of David Copperfield:

... there is occasionally too great an accumulation of clauses, allusions, and factual notations within one sentence. These often result in disjointed, involved, and interminable sentences in which the clarity is seriously impaired.¹⁰

Besides the 'faulty or at least loose syntax', Monod also criticised Dickens for using an 'unsatisfactory' vocabulary, 'either through inaccuracy, or through illegitimate coinages.'¹¹ Such transgressions include 'mumbly', 'grope' (as a noun), 'seedy' (applied to biscuits, meaning 'containing seeds') and 'time-forgotten'.¹² Similar charges are repeated in Monod's study of Martin Chuzzlewit (1985), which confusingly appropriates the title of its subject.¹³

Dickens can be found guilty of another affectation, that of using vulgar turns of phrase. In the writing... there is a certain amount of archaism, affectation and... pedantry.... All these are... proofs of the former journalist's still youthful ebullience, little tricks and pranks, little linguistic capers that he indulges in and perhaps prides himself on... never seeming to consider that they are very inferior forms of art or of self-expression.[My emphasis]¹⁴

Professor Monod, as a non-native speaker of English, is perhaps more acutely aware of what he terms Dickens' 'vulgar turns of phrase', than scholars whose mothertongue is English, since these words are not always to be found in standard grammars and dictionaries. Monod's dissatisfaction with deviation from standard English serves to highlight criticisms which are common throughout the reception of

Dickens' work. For example, in G. L. Brook's The Language of Charles Dickens (1970) deviations from the norm of standard English are generally deplored, whether these occur in the discourse of the characters, or that of the author.¹⁵ More recent work has praised Dickens' knowledge of the variety of English, his use of different dialects and registers.¹⁶ Randolph Quirk in the chapter devoted to Dickens in The Linguist and the English Language (1974) argues that Dickens' writings 'bear constant testimony to an overt interest in language'.¹⁷ This interest was in the use of language and the relation between standard grammar and non-standard usages. Quirk notes with approval the designation of Dickens as 'The Regius Professor of Slang'¹⁸ by an early critic and points to Dickens' interest in the use of spoken language, which only began to be systematically investigated as a result of the development of 'sociolinguistics' a century later. The conclusions of Quirk's essay are that in Dickens 'we have a many-layered, many faceted language economically transmuting both experience and consciousness into a whole which is rich with suggestion.'¹⁹ This has a certain Bakhtinian resonance, entirely fortuitous, since at the time Quirk wrote Bakhtin's work was almost unknown in the West. Modern linguistics, of all schools, has increasingly become descriptive as opposed to prescriptive. It attempts to describe language as it is actually used, rather than attempt to legislate for what people ought to say and write. Many linguists now use the concept of appropriate language for particular contexts, rather than correct language, which was all too often deemed to be the formal written 'standard' language of one social class. However, it is one thing to

assert that no languages, or varieties of language are inherently 'primitive' or 'corrupt' and quite another to suggest that all varieties of language have an equivalent social value, for, patently, they do not. There are distinct advantages for any nation-state in imposing a broad standard language upon the majority of its population, as Modern French was imposed upon the speakers of the other languages of France. While Glaswegian has an equally complex grammar and pronunciation as standard English its speakers need to be able to use standard English for bureaucratic purposes, especially in writing, in cases where they need to communicate with people who are not familiar with their dialect.²⁰ All national languages and varieties of language are in constant change, and the processes of norm making and breaking are equally applicable to every dialect, including 'prestige' standards.

These insights of modern descriptive linguistics have as yet had little impact on historical stylistics of the novel. K. C. Phillipps' Language and Class in Victorian England (1984)²¹, while being a rich repository of detail has a poverty of explanation. Phillipps limits himself to one theoretical concept, the distinction between 'U' and 'Non- U' language introduced by A. S. C. Ross in the 1950's and popularised by Nancy Mitford.²² Phillipps also weights his investigation towards upper-class usage, maintaining that it is impossible to generalise about the speech of the poor, since they are regarded as picturesque individuals, rather than members of a class, by most early Victorian novelists.²³ It follows, then, that while Phillipps has several

interesting snippets describing language use in Dickens, there is no sustained examination of his work.

Knud Sørensen argues that Dickens was a linguistic innovator, both in terms of syntax and vocabulary.²⁴ As an example of syntactic innovation, Sørensen points to the opening of Bleak House, which dispenses with finite verbs:

London. Michaelmas Term lately over, and the Lord Chancellor sitting in Lincoln's Inn Hall. Implacable November weather....

[BH 1]

Sørensen notes that two eminent modern linguists question whether Dickens is overstepping the limits of grammar in this passage.²⁵ The majority of Sørensen's points concern the representation of speech. Dickens blends features of direct speech, 'unconventional indirect speech', free indirect speech and authorial report, with the result that the conventions usually followed in telling a story are broken down. By 'unconventional indirect speech', Sørensen means 'the kind of speech rendering that incorporates features of direct speech'; for example:

He then seized Mr. Carker by the button-hole, and with starting eyes whispered in his ear, that she was a woman of extraordinary charms, Sir. That she was a young widow, Sir. That she was of a fine family, Sir. That Dombey was over head and ears in love with her, Sir, and that it would be a good match on both sides; for she had beauty, blood and talent, and Dombey had fortune; and what more could any couple have?

[DS 363-364]

Conventional indirect speech, as Sørensen points out shifts a first person pronoun to the third person, and is usually phrased in standard English. Besides this Sørensen provides evidence of lexical innovation by comparing thousands of

words found in Dickens with the OED and Supplements, concluding that Dickens' vocabulary 'comprises all the strata that were available to an educated person of his age, plus a stratum that was his own contribution.' Even when the OED records an earlier use, in many cases Dickens makes use of the word within a short period. For example the OED cites the colloquialism 'on spec' in 1832: Dickens uses it in The Pickwick Papers (1837). From this Sørensen claims that Dickens 'was highly creative within lexis; and that where he did not coin a word himself or employ an existing word in a novel sense, he was very much alive to recent neologisms.'²⁶ Hence Sørensen can agree with George Ford that 'alert contemporary readers must... have found his prose "shockingly revolutionary."²⁷ Sørensen reports that to date he has found about a thousand Dickensian neologisms. Among these are many adjectives formed by adding the suffix -ous or -y: cellarous [LD 236], gingerous [OMF 123], prisonous [LD 64], earthquaky [PP 639], jog-trotty [BH 230] and mortary [UT 447]²⁸ Here Dickens extends the normal process of adjective formation found in English to words which are not normally extended in this fashion. As Sørensen himself suggests, there are inherent problems on drawing upon the Oxford English Dictionary as the final arbiter of usage. Sørensen comments that it is not surprising that Dickens' innovations have gone comparatively unnoticed, for many of these which Sørensen claims he introduced are 'current today, and hence unobtrusive.'²⁹ One of Sørensen's examples of a Dickensian innovation is the word accident used to mean 'the victim of an accident' as in 'Rather a good accident brought into the casualty ward.' [PP 438] and 'An accident going to the

Hospital.' [LD 162] This sense of the word, as Sørensen correctly observes, is not recorded in the OED. Sørensen concludes that the usage may have been excluded as being 'too private'.³⁰ Yet it might well be the case that this sense of accident was not a Dickensian innovation, but a colloquial formation used in speech, and later picked up by Dickens. Sørensen also regards butter-fingers as a Dickensian neologism [PP 91], since the OED cites Dickens with the first usage.³¹ Eric Partridge's Dictionary of Slang also gives The Pickwick Papers as the first recorded usage. However, Sørensen does not consider the usage of butter-fingered 'to take hold of things with a loose slippery grip... apt to let things fall, or slip through one's fingers,' which the OED records as early as 1615, noting that in dialect the sense is often 'unable to handle anything hot.' The OED records the first written usages of words, and we need to remember that within the canon of materials the contributors examined, slang and dialectal variants were for the most part excluded. It may well be that Dickens ought to take the credit, not for being the first to create a word, but for being the first to utilise these phrases and constructions of colloquial speech in a novel.

Dickens' habit of wandering the streets of London has been well documented.³² These excursions brought him into contact with people whom his educated middleclass readers would have shunned, and from such contacts Dickens developed an intimate knowledge of a variety of social discourses. In London, Dickens could rely on his own first-hand experience of dialects and registers, but for other parts of the country he

used dialect dictionaries, books written in dialect, or asked friends for information. For the language of the Peggotty family in David Copperfield, he almost certainly used Moor's Suffolk Words and Phrases (1823).³³ Similarly Patricia Ingham has argued that Dickens used two books he owned on Lancashire dialect to create the north country dialect in Hard Times.³⁴ Regardless of the exact sources for certain dialects, the fact that Dickens possessed books on language demonstrates that he took an active interest in it, and as James Joyce was also to do, used this linguistic material in writing. When Dickens planned a book with a Cornish setting he wrote asking for a book with Cornish phrases.³⁵ When he wanted to introduce circus people into Hard Times, he wrote to his friend Mark Lemon for advice:

Will you note down and send me any slang terms among the tumblers and circus-people that you can call to mind? I have noted down some- I want them in a new story- but it is very probable that you will recall several which I have not got.³⁶

Dickens demonstratably did take an interest in language variation, though his concern was not analytical.

In its obituary of Dickens the British Medical Journal praised his accuracy in tracing 'the devious paths of disease and death.... His descriptions of epilepsy in Walter Wilding, and of moral and mental insanity in characters too numerous to mention, show the hand of a master.' Dickens' observation of language pathology is singled out:

... he anticipated the clinical researches of M. Dax, Broca, and Hughlings Jackson, on the connection of right hemiplegia [paralysis] with aphasia (vide Dombey and Son, for the last illness of Mrs Skewton).³⁷

After her sudden paralysis, Mrs Skewton loses the power of speech, on recovery she makes inarticulate sounds [DS 507], then 'she cut some of her words short, and cut out others altogether.' [DS 547]. She produces prom for 'promise' and omits to in 'you must positively prom... come down very soon.' (sic). The /t/ sound in 'positively' is elided also.

She fell into the habit of confounding the names of her two sons-in-law, the living and the deceased; and in general called Mr. Dombey, either "Grangeby," or "Domber," or indifferently both.
[DS 546]

This is one of the types of substitution analysed by Roman Jakobson in his classic paper 'Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Linguistic Disturbances.'³⁸ 'Grangeby' is produced from Granger and Dombey, while 'Domber' is created from the first syllable of Dombey combined with the second syllable of Granger. (In Jakobson's terms these are metonymic substitutions.) It is noticeable that though Dickens' observation was accurate enough to impress the British Medical Journal, the language disturbance is minimal, confined to elisions such as 'sterious' for mysterious as in 'Sterious wretch, who's he?' [DS 547] and 'it's a most trordinry thing' for it's a most extraordinary thing. The syntax is unaffected:

'I won't have visitors - really don't want visitors,' she said; 'little repose- and all that sort of thing - is what I quire. No odious brutes must proach me till I've shaken off this numbness;'
[DS 547]

Syntactic disturbance would be much more unintelligible. It is clear that here, as in presentations of non-standard forms, Dickens moves between degrees of communication and non-communication, never entirely losing sight of the former.

An accurate transcription of an aphasic, like an accurate transcript of thieves' cant, risks utter unintelligibility, if it was presented without gloss. Dickens has not transcribed the pre-existing language of an aphasic, but written a series of semiotic codes whose totality means aphasia. In terms of Bakhtin's reflection model, Mrs Skewton's speech is not the language of aphasia, but an 'image' of aphasia, 'artistically organised.' 39

The relationship between the language of the novel and that which is used in everyday social discourse is both subtle and difficult. In my discussion of Bakhtin, in the opening chapter of this thesis, I argued that it was misleading to polarise 'discourse in the novel' and 'discourse in the real world'. It is especially misleading to theorise the novel as 'a reflection' of other social discourses, because this introduces the whole apparatus of specular metaphors which are inapplicable to language as such, and more importantly reproduces the metaphysical aporia of mimesis. 'Images of language' are thus judged to be more or less accurate reflections of 'language in its concrete living totality.'⁴⁰ Rather than envisaging the language of the novel as a reflection of language, one may theorise a continuum of social discourse, in which the discourse of the novel forms a part. There can be no pure poetics of the novel, for literary uses of language are not separate from the rest of social discourse, but merely a fragment of the social semiotic. 'Literary language' is in other words, merely a domain of the socio-historical linguistic continuum, rather than a reflection of 'living speech.' This theoretical

position does not fetishise literary language, but locates it socio-historically. If there is to be no poetics, then one cannot adopt the position taken on occasion by Bloom, de Man and Hillis Miller in which literary language exists in a non-referential self-enclosed world. I do not seek, therefore, to deny the possibility of reference, but to disclose the manner in which repetition and reproduction take place across social discourses. Mirrors have a part to play in the production of speech of Dickensian characters, for there is anecdotal evidence that he employed their use in the creative process. His eldest daughter, Mamie, describes an occasion when, because of childhood illness, she was allowed to be near her father while he worked in his study.

On one of those mornings, I was lying on the sofa endeavouring to keep perfectly quiet, while my father wrote busily and rapidly at his desk, when he suddenly jumped from his chair and rushed to a mirror which hung near, and in which I could see the reflection of some extraordinary facial contortions which he was making. He returned rapidly to his desk, wrote furiously for a few moments, and then went again to the mirror. The facial pantomime was resumed, and then turning toward, but evidently not seeing, me, he began talking rapidly in a low voice. Ceasing this soon, however, he returned once more to his desk, where he remained silently writing until luncheon time.⁴¹

The mirror here, while it strictly does not reflect anyone apart from Dickens himself, is used as a device to create character by showing Dickens the image of his own face taking on different expressions. It facilitates his creation of another persona, complete with 'low voice.' The mirror both reproduces and creates, in the same way, the 'low voice' is both a reproduction and the voice of the other. Such 'voices' of Dickensian characters are created out of the shreds and patches of Dickens' own observations, his own

language and miming.⁴² Mamie Dickens writes of a 'facial pantomime' and the elements of mime which Derrida discovers within the scene of mimesis are strongly marked. That is the creation, distortion, and production of a supplement as an addition to, copy of and replacement for an original (as here the image in the mirror and the 'low voice' functions as an addition to Dickens' self which can replace or substitute for Dickens' own ego in his writing).⁴³ The 'low voice' is at the same time Dickens' own and that of another, his character. When Dickens created the voices for his characters, these were composed out of elements of social discourse. These elements were extremely selective and strongly marked to accord with the writer's purposes. Dickens' Cockney characters, for example, are not accurate representations of real speech traits of the inner London Working Class- they serve to amuse, perplex, and foreground social and linguistic difference. One ought not merely to criticise, as J. C Wells and others have done, the failure of Dickens accurately to depict such speech: 'Dickens's Cockney is a literary stereotype which was seriously out-of-date at the time he wrote and is now wholly obsolete.'⁴⁴ Resisting the temptation to see such language as failed mimesis, one can begin to understand how Dickens' literary Cockney was shaped by, and in turn helped to shape the socially constructed discourse that we term Cockney.

In the example which follows, the famous substitution of W for V (and vice versa) in The Pickwick Papers, rather than a direct mimetic representation of a particular accent, there is a complex mediation between texts, sounds and graphics.

It is also my contention that this episode deals directly with the relations between power and knowledge in social discourse, rather than just being an amusing scene.

"What's your name, Sir?" enquired the Judge.

"Sam Weller, my Lord," replied that gentleman.

"Do you spell it with a 'V' or a 'W'?" enquired the Judge.

"That depends upon the taste and fancy of the speller, my Lord," replied Sam, "I never had occasion to spell it more than once or twice in my life, but I spells it with a 'V.'" Here a voice in the gallery exclaimed aloud, "Quite right too, Samivel; quite right. Put it down a we, my Lord, put it down a we."

[PP 530]

This scene, set in a law court, might have been designed to demonstrate the assertion in Michel Foucault's 'Orders of Discourse' that:

We know perfectly well that we are not free to say just anything, that we cannot simply speak of anything, when we like or where we like; not just anyone, finally, may speak of just anything.⁴⁵

The humour of this scene arises out of the transgression of the rules of discourse. The Judge begins by asking Sam to declare his identity. This is a characteristically hostile question from speakers with power over their interlocutors. Power means, in the last analysis, power over the physical body, in extremes of sovereign power, the right to decide the life or death of the subject.⁴⁶ It is this question that the convict asks Pip, after silencing him and threatening to cut his throat at the beginning of Great Expectations, then demanding the answer to be repeated.

The person of the Judge is subsumed by his institutional role; he is the Judge, rather than Mr. Justice Stareleigh, denoted by title not name. It would, of course, be quite

improper for Sam to respond with "And what's your name, Sir?" It is arguable that the normal condition of 'dialogue' is between master and slave rather than between 'free individuals' as Saussure and Jakobson assume. Sam cannot refuse to answer the Judge's questions, to do so would amount to 'contempt' and result in imprisonment; instead he subverts the questions, damaging the case against Pickwick. The subversion of law begins with the contravention of the laws of spelling. We should not lose sight of the fact that it is Dickens who is the subversive intelligence behind the character of Sam Weller. The Judge asks Sam if Weller is spelt with a "v" or a "w"? Notice that there must have been a question of doubt for the question to have been needed to be asked. As is still the practice in English courts the Judge is making a record of what is said for his own use (this is separate from any official transcript made by the official note-taker). Ambiguity and error must be avoided. The novel, a written discourse, provides the illusion that it is representing speech which the Judge is himself representing in writing. This complicated scene provides the opportunity for confusion and humour. To the question 'What is your name?' Sam replies correctly 'Sam Weller'- Dickens uses the correct spelling. But on being asked if it is spelt with a "v" or a "w", Weller replies that it depends upon the taste and fancy of the speller.' This is clearly unacceptable, for since printing with moveable type and mass literacy, the spelling of names had become fixed. No individual may freely alter the spelling of their own name at will, without causing confusion in the bureaucratic institutions of an advanced social system. Spelling is not

dependent on individual whims, especially with regard to personal names. State institutions need to prevent themselves from identifying two individuals, 'Samuel Weller' and 'Samivel Veller' where only one person is denoted. Sam suggests that he has not written his name 'more than once or twice' in his life (though since he later writes 'a valentine' this is unlikely to be true [PP 495]). Sam then goes on to claim that he spells it with a "V". A voice from the gallery, recognisable as his father, confirms this: 'Quite right too, Samivel; quite right. Put it down a we, my Lord, put it down a we.' The Judge indignantly demands the production of that person, but he can't be found. He asks Sam, if he knows who it was. Sam suspects that it was his father, and, gazing into the lantern in the roof, truthfully replies that he does not see him, to the Judges' question 'Do you see him here now?'

Tony Weller, of course, has no right to speak, and would have been committed to prison for contempt, if only he could have been pointed out. As Dickens recognises, it is appropriate for the father to speak authoritatively on the spelling of the family name. This is his symbolic function to lay down the patriarchal law. But in this special situation the father pronouncing upon the spelling of the name of the father is a transgression, for Weller has no right to speak. The irony of the father's words lies in their lack of respect for a greater authority, the word of the Judge. Who else should know how to spell Weller, if not the father? The joke is a complicated one, we laugh at the little Judge [PP 530], whose will is subverted, and whose authority is ridiculed.

He does not know how to spell 'Weller'. We laugh at the impertinence of Tony Weller's interjection and at Sam's clever evasion of pointing out his father by looking at the roof. Sam tells the truth at all times in court. We laugh at the transposition of "w" and "v" marked by 'Quite right too, Samivel.... Put it down a we.' Neither of the Wellers appear to know how to spell their own name, so there is a joke shared by Dickens and the reader at the expense of the illiterate. The authority of the author spells it Weller, so the Wellers and presumably the Judge are in error. Put it down a we as opposed to write down "v" increases confusion, Weller pronouncing the letter V as we. Paradoxically if the Judge had written down what was said, we as opposed to what was meant "v", then he would have ended up with the correct spelling We-ller. So looking at the graphic representation, Tony Weller is inadvertently correct, even while he is mistaken. We is also the first person nominative plural--this adds another possibility of confusion.

The jokes and confusion arise partly out of the illusion that the novel represents pre-existing spoken discourse, rather than being a discourse in itself. Terry Eagleton attacks the deconstructionalist view that novels are nothing but a tissue of intertextual traces:

David Carroll dismisses Bakhtin's notion of the novel as 'empiricist', yet another hapless prisoner of the illusion that discourse can 'represent' historical reality. In one sense, perhaps, this comes down to arguing that it is empiricist to claim the Artful Dodger speaks a kind of cockney.⁴⁷

This however, begs the question of representation, which is exactly the concept that Derrida seeks to undermine. The

reflection of an economic base in a superstructure including art and perhaps language in classic Marxist theory depends on a series of metaphors which are never examined. Ideology, as classically defined by Marx, depends on such a specular metaphor: 'If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside down as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process.'⁴⁸ If this is to be taken as anything other than empty rhetoric, then it raises as many questions as it purports to answer. As we have seen, Bakhtin's theory of language and his associated theory of the novel depend upon visual metaphors of reflection and refraction. Derrida urges that such metaphors should be critically examined, if we are to reach a greater precision in theory. To be blunt and specific one could ask of Eagleton what kind of Cockney does the Artful Dodger speak? The Artful Dodger speaks only in a manner of speaking, due to Dickens' writing. The editors of the Clarendon edition of Oliver Twist declare that:

The use of thieves' cant is Dickens' chief method of giving realism to the speech of the low characters; it helps to mask his somewhat implausible avoidance of blasphemies and obscenities.

[OT 401]

So the kind of Cockney spoken by the Dodger is highly selective. In his introduction to the Clarendon The Pickwick Papers, James Kinsley argues that:

Dickens' Cockney, if unadulterated, is well watered; impressionistic and selective (as all dialect for polite reading has to be); a literary stereotype constructed on a small number of distinctive features.

[PP xlii]

By far the most detailed examination of the sounds of speech in Dickens is Stanley Gerson's Sound and Symbol in the Dialogue of the Works of Charles Dickens (Stockholm, 1967) which draws on the historical investigations into pronunciation undertaken by Dobson, Ekwall and Horn-Lehnert.⁴⁹ Gerson lists the many occasions on which 'w' is substituted for 'v' and the fewer occurrences of 'v' for 'w'.⁵⁰ There is a considerable history of such substituted spellings to suggest London speech, Sheridan remarks on the interchange of /w/ and /v/ in his Course of Lectures on Elocution [1762].⁵¹ Victorian usage manuals select the change as a particular shibboleth. (I have already discussed Derrida's use of Shibboleth as a variety of difference, a mark insignificant in itself, yet which is devisive.⁵²) Walker's Critical Pronouncing Dictionary [1841 edition] observes:

The pronunciation of v for w, and more frequently of w for v, among the inhabitants of London, and those not always of the lower order, is a blemish of the first magnitude... If you be very careful to make a pupil pronounce veal and vinegar, not as if written weal and winegar, you will find him very apt to pronounce wine wind, as if written vine and vind.⁵³

However such a substitution was declared by Henry Sweet in 1888 to be 'extinct' and it certainly does not exist in present day London speech.⁵⁴ Habits of speech are not uniform and pronunciation may undergo considerable change in the course of a generation, changes which may not be recorded by written transcriptions of speech. The transposition of W and V according to Raymond Chapman (1984) remains something of a mystery.⁵⁵ Did speakers in fact continually transpose the two sounds? Chapman suggests another explanation:

It is possible that London speech produced an intermediate sound, perhaps the labio-dental frictionless continuant /ʋ/ like that of modern Dutch or a voiced bi-labial fricative /β/. Either of these, unfamiliar to speakers of standard English, tend to be interpreted as /v/ when uttered initially by a foreigner.⁵⁶

So the use of this sound in words beginning both with w- and v- may have suggested that Cockneys confused these sounds, and this supposition would be reinforced by the deviant spellings of a writer trying to depict Cockney speech. In conclusion, Chapman suggests that this feature falls into the doubtful area where he is not sure whether writers are using a conventional deviant spelling to evoke the impression of a particular form of speech.⁵⁷

To use terminology foreign to Chapman's work, one could conclude that the W/V transposition in novels was used to signify Cockney, or rather to signify the poor and uneducated of parts of central London. It would be a mistake to suppose that Dickens is transcribing pre-existing speech in the dialogues contained within his fiction. The most cursory examination of the extreme forms of Cockney, in terms of a deviation from a standard, indicate that there is no consistency. Tony Weller says 'vos' for was, but 'wot' for what. [PP 843] This has nothing to do with the sounds of the language, but everything to do with the process of signifying through deviant spelling that he is uneducated low class speaker.

Raymond Chapman's supposition that Cockneys did not transpose W and V, but produced an intermediate sound not found in standard English is lent support by a contemporary newspaper

report of Dickens reading 'Boots at the Holly-Tree Inn'.

According to the review Dickens reproduced:

...all the characteristics of emphatic humble Cockney conversation, as far as they can be rendered consonant with the graceful interest of the tale. It is quite a treat to hear Mr. Dickens pronounce the Londoner's 'w', which, as those who have nice ears are aware, is only half a 'v', and is grossly caricatured when a full 'v' is substituted for it.⁵⁸

A similar suggestion to Chapman's was advanced in Otto Jespersen's A Modern English Grammar [1922-49].⁵⁹ Jespersen rejects the systematic interchange of 'w' and 'v' as 'psychologically unthinkable, the explanation is probably that an intermediate sound was found... this would strike those accustomed to a strict distinction between [w] and [v] as something different from the sound expected... and they would naturally interpret the intermediate sound as the wrong one in each case.'⁶⁰ Jespersen's argument that the sound change is 'psychologically unthinkable' together with the evidence of the newspaper report of Dickens' reading convincingly suggests that there was an intermediate sound which Cockney speakers produced, rather than substitute /v/ for /w/ and /w/ for /v/ in each case. Stanley Gerson who prefers the substitution explanation and maintains that Cockney's were 'confused' as to which sound to produce is working within an assumption that the sounds of Standard English are 'correct' and any differences must be the result of error or 'confusion'.⁶¹

The Judge's problems arise because, speaking a different language to the Wellers he would not produce or be used to discriminating this intermediate sound /ʋ/ or /β/, neither of which is a phoneme of Standard English. In his public

readings, Dickens apparently reproduced one of these intermediate sounds and used play between spoken and written language to good effect in The Pickwick Papers. The v in Weller's Samivel, then is only an indication of the word's pronunciation, it is "only half a 'v'."⁶² Later in the novel, there is a further encounter between law and this anomalous sound for which there is no alphabetic representation in English. At the Counsel's Office, Tony Weller is led to the section dealing with 'w' that being the first letter of the deceased's name. Weller responds 'There's somethin' wrong here. We's our letter- this wont do.' The officials then give their opinion that the business cannot be proceeded with under the letter 'W', but Sam drags his father to the counter and makes him sign. [PP 856]

In Dickens the reader needs to move between writing and speech (which is invisible and can only appear as a symptom in writing) for example as the 'v' in 'Samivel' may indicate an intermediate sound between /v/ and /w/. Harold Bloom reminds us that 'the very essence of oral tradition is that it should defeat all historical and critical scholarship.'⁶³ Hence in a very pure and essential sense the exact sound of past oral culture is lost to us. No-one knows exactly how the inhabitants of areas of London corresponding to Dickens' 'Jacob's Island' actually spoke in the 1840's. Transcription by writing necessarily fails to capture the spoken word. No corpus, however large, could be representative of the entire language. Commentators on Dickens' language often have a working assumption that he is transcribing some pre-existing speech. This is of course quite wrong. All forms of

language in Dickens have a literary shape. They are written, and the speech effect is secondary, depending on the work of the reader, who constructs the spoken form as she or he constructs characters out of scattered indices and stereotyped roles. 'Speech' in the novel, as in any written text, literary or non-literary, is always a secondary effect, always inferred, never present. Since our knowledge of Victorian Cockney is based upon written material, then it is impossible to step outside the text, to judge the text against the spoken word. Dialogue in a novel is absolutely unlike tape recorded speech, since it is written and has a different purpose, and displays different linguistic features. In describing Dickens' Cockney, one is necessarily involved in intertextual relationships. Many later writers modelled themselves on Dickens, but pace Eagleton it is empiricist to claim that the Artful Dodger speaks a kind of Cockney. Moreover, if it is forgotten that the Dodger speaks only in a manner of speaking, by virtue of the conventional signification systems of novelistic discourse, it may also lead to gross oversimplification and error. In Eagleton's sentence, the word 'empiricist' has a symbolic function; all too often the 'history' which is defended from post-structuralist deviation has a purely symbolic value as well. The examination of the strategies of communication and non-communication in Dickens by drawing upon post-structuralism could not escape history, and given its time of production would be more pertinent than a comparison of the Dodger's Cockney with other textual material in the name of 'historical reality.'

To sum up: this episode, besides demonstrating the conflict of discourses also shows the effect of écriture in speech, that the undecidable factor that has been designated 'writing' appears in speech as well, and that as Derrida suggests, speech and writing are thoroughly folded together and inseparable.

Samuel Beckett's famous instructions for reading Joyce are useful in reading Dickens. They express in a very pure manner, the indivisibility of form and content, which is a central tenet of modernist literature and criticism, and also the dogma of textuality - writing is writing:

Here form is content, content is form. You complain that this stuff is not written in English. It is not written at all. It is not to be read - or rather it is not only to be read. It is to be looked at and listened to. His writing is not about something; it is that something itself.⁶⁴

Beckett claims Shakespeare and Dickens as precursors in fusing the substance of words with their meaning, 'Shakespeare uses fat, greasy words to express corruption.... We hear the ooze squelching all through Dickens' description of the Thames in Great Expectations.'⁶⁵ Since, however, I argue against a mimetic interpretation of Dickens, I might add that the ooze of the Thames may squelch in the reader's imagination, but it cannot get inside their boots. The squelch of the river is an effect of language.

The language of Dickens needs therefore to be looked at, as well as listened to, for it exploits graphics to play with the illusion of sound: 'When he was very loud, I use capitals.' explains Dickens when suggesting the voice of a black dance-caller in 'Poor Mercantile Jack'[UT 46]⁶⁶ In

this essay Dickens describes a night spent in company with the police in Liverpool's dockland, spent visiting the haunts of sailors.⁶⁷ Dickens has immense sympathy for the sailors of all nationalities, and very little for the people on shore who cater to their needs in the bars, common lodging houses and (by inference) brothels of the town.⁶⁸ The language of the dance-caller is a tour de force.

"Ah, la'ads!" said a negro sitting by the door, "gib the jebblem a darnse. Tak' yah pardlers, jebblem, for 'um QUAD-rill."

This was the landlord, in a Greek cap, and a dress half Greek and half English. As master of the ceremonies, he called all the figures, and occasionally addressed himself parenthetically - after this manner. When he was very loud, I use capitals.

"Now den! Hoy! ONE. Right and left. (Put a steam on, gib 'um powder.) LA-dies' hail. BAL-loon say. Lemonade! TWO. AD-warnse and go back (gib 'ell a breakdown, shake it out o'yerselbs, keep a movil). SWING-corners, BAL-loon say, and Lemonade! (Hoy!) THREE. GENT come for'ard with a lady and go back, hoppesite come for'ard and do what yer can. (Aeiohoy!) BAL-loon say and leetle lemonade (Dat hair nigger by 'um fireplace 'hind a'time, shake it out o'yerselbs, gib 'ell a breakdown.) Now den! Hoy! FOUR! Lemonade. BAL-loon say, and swing. FOUR ladies meets in 'um middle, FOUR gents goes round 'um ladies, FOUR gents passes out under 'um ladies' arms, SWING- and Lemonade till 'a moosic can't play no more! (Hoy, Hoy!)"

[UT 46]

In this passage Dickens attempts to represent the inflexions of Black English and the particular rythems of dance-calling. Dickens has explained his use of brackets to indicate the caller's running comments on the progress of the dance, and the capital letters to indicate increased volume. 'Put a steam on, gib 'um powder' are plausible nautical expressions, here used metaphorically. The dance instructions: 'LA-dies' hail. BAL-loon say. Lemonade', I take to mean 'Ladies chain. Balance sway. Promenade' There

is a pun on the sound of 'balance' which is represented as 'BAL -loon' and 'promenade' which becomes 'Lemonade' (these puns become clear if the passage is read aloud). The sounds of many words here are represented by other English words, for example 'opposite' becomes 'hoppersite', (opposite prefixed by 'intrusive "h"' but also composed of hopper and site. 'Sway' becomes 'say' and 'there' becomes 'hair'. In these cases, rather than indicate the pronunciation of a word by altering its orthography (as 'music' becomes 'moosic' and 'of yourselves' becomes 'o'yerselbs') Dickens indicates the pronunciation by substituting other words, which have their own meaning. The total effect is quite complex. There is also the suggestion of a pun in 'FOUR gents passes out under 'um ladies' arms', with 'passes out' suggesting fainting as well as executing the dance figure. 'Balloon' and 'lemonade' the words which are introduced to suggest the sounds of other words, themselves are suggestive of a children's party. Dickens regarded these black sailors sympathetically, but akin to children. They are described as dancing with 'a childish good-humoured enjoyment that was very prepossessing.' The police superintendent explains that 'these poor fellows' generally kept together because 'they were at a disadvantage singly, and liable to slights in the neighbouring streets.'

Dickens concludes this episode by leaving money to buy drinks all round:

But, if I were Light Jack, I should be very slow to interfere oppressively with Dark Jack, for, whenever I have had to do with him I have found him a simple and a gentle fellow. Bearing this in mind, I asked his friendly permission to leave him restoration of beer, in wishing him good night, and thus it fell out that the last words I heard him

say as I blundered down the worn stairs, were,
"Jebblem's elth! Ladies drinks fust!"
[UT 47]

While Dickens' treatment of these black sailors is patronising, the tone is consistently sympathetic, and the whole episode one of innocent fun when compared to the other sailors' haunts Dickens visited that night. He observes that the black sailors are in the company of white women, but 'Dark Jack's delight was the least unlovely Nan, both morally and physically, that I saw that night.' [UT 46] Certainly his treatment of the black sailors was considerably more enlightened than his attitudes to women and Irish people also encountered that night.⁶⁹

This passage is a good illustration of Beckett's contention that the text 'must be looked at and listened to'. Merely hearing the text read aloud, one would lose the graphic distribution of the letters and the ambivalences in word-play which demand physical sight of the words in order to perceive them. The creation of a linguistic identity for the black dance-caller illustrates what Derrida has termed différance; the process of differentiation and deferment in which 'balloon say' is also 'balance sway'.⁷⁰ It is also a reminder that différance functions in the creation of colonial discourse in which racial and national identities are constructed through linguistic differentiation. The national and racial differentiations Derrida discloses in 'Shibboleth' are fundamental to his concept of différance which is never mere innocent punning. Here the puns on 'balloon' and 'lemonade' represent the black sailors as children and is part of the discourse the British Empire constructed for

itself to manage its subjects. One of Dickens' most idiosyncratic and individual acts of linguistic creation at the same time is part of a vast text which needs to represent colonised people as children so as enforce their subjection.⁷¹

In the autobiographical fragment which Dickens sent to Forster, there is a reflection on writing, which seems characteristic of Dickens' attitude towards language, since it focuses upon the materiality of signification itself. While he was at the blacking factory, Dickens was allowed half-an-hour for tea. He sometimes frequented a coffee shop in St Martin's Lane, in the door of which was set:

An oval glass-plate, with COFFEE-ROOM printed on it, addressed towards the street. If I ever find myself in a very different kind of coffee-room now, but where there is such an inscription on glass, and read it backward on the wrong side MOOR-EEFFOC (as I often used to do then, in a dismal reverie) a shock goes through my blood.⁷²

There are several things to notice about this anecdote. The rather Proustian involuntary memory has painful associations, each time the reversed coffee-room sign is read. Dickens is reading the signifier itself, without at once jumping across to the signified. He is intensely aware of the physical material of language, in this case the letters themselves. In this reversed reading, the simple shop-sign has been 'made strange'. There was an opportunity to play with this floating signifier, to produce perhaps 'more of fog' or 'more effort' from it. (This is speculative, but Dickens was open to such speculation.) The apparently meaningless arrangement of letters invite the reader to endow them with meaning.

Notice also that Dickens' reading is active. Rather than writing 'MOOR EFFOC' which is what would actually be seen in reverse, he has re-aligned the signifiers where necessary, so that they appear as English letters and can be 'read' as words. Such linguistic play with signifiers, is characteristic of Dickens' style; there is nothing to compare with this in other English novelists of his time. His attention to the physical materiality of language, both in sound and in writing has many facets. For example, Quirk, Brook and Monod have all remarked on an aspect of Dickens' writing which causes them minor irritation;

Substandard spelling is fairly common in the novels of Dickens with a function which may seem hard to justify, where it is simply a more phonetic way than the standard English spelling of representing the normal pronunciation.⁷³

Brook's examples include conker, passinger, minnit and privilidge. Here the spelling does not seem to represent any unusual sound, but a semiotic analysis reveals that the letters are used to signify a non-standard discourse. The visual shape of the words are employed as well as the sounds they represent. Sometimes Dickens uses this effect to connote other significations, as in the spelling of Mrs Gamp's pelisse 'meaning the constabulary' [MC 623] which suggests 'pelisse' the garment as well as 'police.'

In Dickens there is a great deal of conversational misunderstanding, usually for a humorous effect, yet often the joke has a serious purpose. Typically Dickens utilises a slippage between signifier and signified, the written signifier having two or more concepts associated with it.

For example in Dombey and Son Captain Cuttle proposes a toast:

"I'll give you a toast," said the Captain,
"Wal'r!"

"Who?" submitted Mr. Perch.

"Wal'r!" repeated the Captain, in a voice of thunder.

Mr. Perch, who seemed to remember having heard in infancy that there was once a poet of that name, made no objection; but he was much astonished at the Captain's coming into the City to propose a poet; indeed if he had proposed to put a poet's statue up - say Shakespeare's for example in a civic thoroughfare, he could hardly have done a greater outrage to Mr. Perch's experience.

[DS 234-235]

Captain Cuttle elides the /t/ in Walter, making Mr. Perch think he is toasting Edmund Waller. The joke, such as it is, is based upon Cuttle's pronunciation and Perch's misunderstanding. Such misunderstandings are common in Dickens, amusing or infuriating by turn. But their cumulative effect is to indicate the arbitrary nature of language, producing 'Vertige du déplacement' in Stephen Heath's phrase.⁷⁴ The sheer quantity of puns and misunderstanding tends to produce a view of language that stresses its tricky material qualities, its capacity to separate persons and social groups, to deceive, trap and wound.

The Wellers, father and son, take especial delight in misunderstanding.

"A-do, Samivel," said the old gentleman.

"Wot's a-do?" enquired Sam.

"Vell, good bye, then" said the old gentleman.

"Oh, that's wot you're aimin' at, is it?" said Sam.

"Good bye, old double-vicket."

[PP 700]

There is a play between ado 'Wot's a-do' meaning 'What's the matter' and an elided how (do you) do the conventional phatic greeting. The Wellers engage habitually in such verbal fencing which stands them in good stead in encounters with the world. Pickwick, on the other hand, as a linguistic innocent, ends up in the Fleet Prison as a result of misunderstanding: the case of Bardell v. Pickwick hinges on the meaning of his words and behaviour to Mrs Bardell. In court, the production of little notes such as 'Dear Mrs. B., I shall not be at home till tomorrow. Slow coach. ... Don't trouble yourself about the warming -pan' [PP 521] constitute damning evidence against him. Sergeant Buzfuz connotes warming-pan with hidden fires of passion and reads 'Slow Coach' as a pet name for Pickwick himself! James Kinsley suggests that the interpretation of letters was modeled on a case Dickens reported for the Morning Chronicle, Norton v. Melbourne in which the counsel made great play with the interpretation of short notes.⁷⁵

An interesting sequence of conversational exchanges occurs between Miss Tox and the as yet unidentified Mr Toodle in Chapter 2 of Dombey and Son.

"... you were going to have the goodness to inform me, when we arrived at the door, that you were by trade, a --"

"Stoker," said the man.

"A choker!" said Miss Tox, quite aghast.

"Stoker," said the man. "Steaminjin."

"Oh-h! Yes!" returned Miss Tox, looking thoughtfully at him, and seeming still to have but a very imperfect understanding of his meaning.

[DS 16]

The two parties engaged in this dialogue do not have an equivalence of social standing; Miss Tox is questioning the

man, seeking to test the suitability of his wife for employment. Her mishearing of 'stoker' as 'choker' hints at a bourgeois fantasy of working-class violence. He is not yet individuated by a proper name, but remains 'the man'. Miss Tox does not understand, because she has no knowledge of the work of a stoker upon a locomotive. The Clarendon Edition helpfully restores Dickens' manuscript Steaminjin where the proofs read Steam engine or Steam ingine⁷⁶ The spelling Steaminjin while rendering the character's accent as non-standard also functions as an alienation device. It makes strange the man's reply for the reader as well as for Miss Tox. This is presumably why the printer 'corrected' it!

The ludic, or game element in Dickens is considerable. While sheer amusement is a component of this, many examples (as in the case of Mr. Toodle and Miss Tox) involve conflicts of social power. Mystification through puns often involve non-standard spelling as a means of estrangement. Several of Dickens' school friends from Wellington House Academy recalled his adeptness at producing a 'lingo' by the addition of a few letters added to each word, so that they could carry out secret conversations understandable only to those within the group, while the boys hoped that they would be considered to be foreigners.⁷⁷ Dickens, like Joyce, seems to have retained in adult life the ability to play with language that many children possess. While secret codes, puns and name-calling are the stuff of the playground, it is arguable that they are central to the novels of Joyce and Dickens and indeed to some fundamental operations of language as a social

semiotic. Chapter Four; 'Names and Name-Calling in Dickens' will develop this proposition.

In the first chapter of this thesis I described a distinction made in Bakhtin's Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics between monologic and polyphonic discourses.⁷⁸ The term 'polyphony' was later abandoned by Bakhtin and the distinction made between 'monoglossia' and 'heteroglossia'. Bakhtin came to see all language finally as heteroglossic, but found differing degrees of heteroglossia within discourse. Bakhtin's point about degrees of heteroglossia can be explored by contrasting the encoding of speech characterisations and language diversity in the encounter between John Browdie and a waiter in Nicholas Nickleby, and that between Lady Dedlock and Jo in Bleak House:

'Here's a gen'l'man for you, sir,' said the waiter, looking in.

'A wa'at, for me?' cried John, as though he thought it must be a letter, or a parcel.

'A gen'l'man, sir.'

'Stars and gathers, chap!' said John, 'Wha'at doest thou coom and say thot for? In wi' 'un.'

'Are you at home, sir?'

'At whoam! cried John, 'I wish I wur; I'd ha' tea'd two hour ago.'

[NN 541-542]

This passage is relatively monoglossic, the speech characterization of John Browdie creates his image as a Yorkshireman abroad. His speech is shown as different by the orthography which isolates it against the standard spelling of most of the waiter's speech and that of the surrounding authorial prose. Humour is created by juxtaposition of language styles and the way of life indicated by those styles. The waiter's elision 'gen'l'man' and his punctuation of each phrase by a concluding 'sir', characterises him as a

professional servant, for whom all the males he waits upon are by definition 'gentlemen', a mere courtesy title. John Browdie does not see himself as a gentleman, nor is he used to visits from persons of wealth and rank. The waiter's question 'Are you at home, sir?' is a coded message meaning 'are you willing to receive visitors?', but Browdie unfamiliar with middle-class conventions of life and language, takes the question literally; if only he were - 'I'd ha' tea'd two hour ago'.

In Bleak House, there is an example of more complex speech characterisation and this seems illustrative of a far greater degree of heteroglossia. Jo, the crossing sweeper, is questioned by Lady Dedlock dressed as a servant, as she seeks the places associated with Captain Horden under the guise of Nemo, the law-writer. Any real-life encounter between the wife of a baronet and a crossing-sweeper would be unlikely to have been more than fleeting. This said, Henry Mayhew's London Labour and the London Poor describes several crossing sweepers who had gentry, even aristocracy as clients and it appears that the occupation of crossing sweeper was likely to promote meetings between the gentry and those members of the London street underclass who begged from them.⁷⁹ Dickens intends to show the interconnectedness of society by arranging this conversation at 'Tom-all-Alone's', the filthy 'dilapidated street, avoided by all decent people' [BH 220] and the nearby foul burial ground that serves as a symbolic representation of evil and corruption. His readers would themselves have been unlikely to converse with persons of the social level as Jo, or be familiar with such places. Indeed,

just before the encounter Dickens asks what connections there could be between such disparate people and places [BH 219] Lady Dedlock, though not identified as such, questions the boy:

'Are you the boy I've read of in the papers?' she asked behind her veil.

'I don't know,' says Jo, staring moodily at the veil, 'nothink about no papers. I don't know nothink about nothink at all.'

'Were you examined at an Inquest?'

'I don't know nothink about no- where I was took by the beadle, do you mean?' says Jo. 'Was the boy's name at the Inkwich, Jo?'

'Yes,'

'That's me!' says Jo.

'Come farther up.'

'You mean about the man?' says Jo, following.
'Him as wos dead?'

[BH 223]

Jo's speech apart from double negation, shows little sign of non-standard formations. Merely a few non-standard pronunciations, 'wos' for 'was' and 'nothink' for 'nothing'. 'Inquest', repeated by him as 'Inkwich' perhaps contains a pun on 'Ink -which' drawing attention to the document writing which is an important theme of the novel. However, Jo's speech is free from non-standard vocabulary. Jo is commanded to be silent.

'Listen and be silent. Don't talk to me, and stand farther from me! Can you show me all those places that were spoken of in the account I read?.... Go before me, and show me all those dreadful places. Stop opposite to each, and don't speak to me unless I speak to you. Don't look back. Do what I want and I will pay you well.'

[BH 224-225]

Because Lady Dedlock does not wish to be observed in connection with the boy, she wants him to keep his distance, even while she elicits information from him. But the general commandment to silence, and the control of the discourse of

another is common to all conversations between the empowered and the powerless. In Dickens, dialogue frequently takes the form of interrogation.

Jo attends closely while the words are being spoken; tells them off on his broom-handle, finding them rather hard; pauses to consider their meaning; considers it satisfactory, and nods his ragged head.

'I'm fly,' says Jo. 'But fen larks, you know. Stow hooking it!'

'What does the horrible creature mean?' exclaims the servant, recoiling from him.

'Stow cutting away, you know!' says Jo.

'I don't understand you. Go on before! I will give you more money than you ever had in your life.'

[BH 224]

The present reader will need a glossary to see what Jo means. 80 But it seems likely that most Victorian readers of Bleak House would have no more understood Jo, than did Lady Dedlock. Dickens has not glossed the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases, as he had done in earlier fiction, during the first conversation between the Artful Dodger and Oliver Twist, for example. He leaves Jo's words unexplained either by Jo, or by authorial comment. With slight modification of Jakobson's terms this communication situation might be analysed as follows: Dickens (addresser 1) has encoded a message in the code of Jo (addresser 2) that is unintelligible to (addressee 1) his contemporary reader, or (addressee 2) Lady Dedlock, but which may be decoded from a position outside this speech situation, the present reader with a good historical dictionary of English slang. What is interesting is that it does not matter that Lady Dedlock or the Victorian reader did not understand exactly; for the intention of Dickens' message, so far as it may be reconstructed was to teach his reader about the function of

non-communication. This is most effectively done by embodying non-communication into the very message itself, as opposed to merely talking about it. Despite their speaking varieties of English so diverse as to appear different languages, despite their utterly different ways of life, Lady Dedlock and Jo are connected by the plot. In not understanding Jo, but wanting to go on, the Victorian reader is placed in the same position as Lady Dedlock. Speech characterisation is not used merely to identify Jo, though of course, it is used for that purpose. His 'I don't know nothink...' is a speech characteristic, but it also in retrospect, suggests the helpless and inadvertent ignorance of Jo, a thematic refrain which Dickens repeats in protest.

The dialogue continues, the short lines and repetitions building up tension until they arrive at Tom-all-Alone's'

Cook's Court. Jo stops. A pause.

'Who lives here?'

'Him wot give me his writing, and give me half a bull,' says Jo, in a whisper, without looking over his shoulder.

'Go on to the next.'

'Krook's house. Jo stops again. A longer pause.

'Who lives here?'

'He lived here, Jo answers as before.

[BH 224]

The use of the historic present tense here, as throughout the third person narrative sections of the novel creates an impression of immediacy and pace.

The final confrontation at Tom-all-Alone's is a further demonstration of heteroglossia:

'Is this place of abomination, consecrated ground?'

'I don't know nothink of consequential ground,' says Jo, still staring.

'Is it blessed?'

'WHICH?' says Jo, in the last degree amazed.
'Is it blessed?'
'I'm blest if I know,' says Jo, staring more than ever; 'but I shouldn't think it warn't. Blest?' repeats Jo, something troubled in his mind. 'It an't done it much good if it is. 'Blest? I should think it was t'othered myself. But I don't know nothink!

[BH 225]

Here, it is Lady Dedlock who is uncomprehending. The word-play situates the reader in the position of Jo, humour creates identification, as the reader is forced to voice the unstated thought that the place is cursed or damned. Lady Dedlock explains the meaning of the word consecrated to Jo, 'Is it blessed?' - has the ground been sanctified by having a priest say a blessing over it. Jo understands blest as 'being especially fortunate' or 'having received God's favour'. He repeats the word, this time using it as a euphemism for damned or cursed in the phrase 'I'm blest if I know'.⁸¹ Blessed is the usual spelling, while blest according to the Oxford English Dictionary is usually poetic. Both are usually pronounced /blest/. The difference in the way in which the word is spelled in Lady Dedlock's speech and Jo's helps to indicate a different meaning. The capital letters of 'WHICH?' give emphasis to the word, Dickens does not comment on his use of capitals here as he often did elsewhere.⁸² The encounter will have consequences for both characters, so Tom-all-Alone's will be consequential ground after all, and Jo's 'I don't know nothink' becomes ironic. It is evident that in these passages, much more takes place than a simple representation of the variety of spoken English, and an identification of characters through their speech patterns. There is a hierarchy of discourses, but the

narrative voice does not settle all the reader's problems, for the reader is left to struggle with an alien language as Lady Dedlock did.

As a more extensive example of the foregoing argument and demonstration of the operation of 'negative linguistics', it is instructive to compare the language exchanges and linguistic experiences of Pip and Joe during and after their respective first visits to Miss Havisham.

When Pip and Mr Pumblechook are admitted to the courtyard by Estella, Pip is introduced to her by Pumblechook. She, however, does not tell them her name, nor is it yet revealed to the reader; she merely repeats Pumblechook's phrase: 'This is Pip, is it? ... come in Pip.' [GE 50] There is already an inequivalence of power between them; Pip does not know her name, does not ask and calls her 'Miss'. She, on the other hand, knows his name, but calls him 'boy', 'with a carelessness that was far from complimentary' [GE 51], though she is about his own age. Estella addresses Pip as if he was a servant.

Pip does not even know the name of the house he has gone to, though he is curious, when Estella refers to it as the 'Manor House' [GE 51]

'Is that the name of this house, miss?'
'One of its names, boy.'
'It has more than one, then, miss?'
'One more. Its other name was Satis; which is Greek, or Latin, or Hebrew, or all three - or all one to me- for enough.'
'Enough House!' said I: 'that's a curious name' miss.
'Yes,' she replied; 'but it meant more than it said. It meant, when it was given, that whoever had this house, could want nothing else. They must

have been easily satisfied in those days, I should think.'

[GE 51]

Pip has a curiosity about the relation between names and things, and like David Copperfield, will receive many lessons on the connotations and origins of words. The crucial difference is that Pip's lessons are often about class, whereas the question of class is elided in David Copperfield. Here Pip learns that words are not always related to things by a simple one-to-one correspondence, for the signifier Satis is plural. He learns too that words can mean more than they say; that there can be an implied meaning, or a meaning different from that intended by the person who made the original utterance. In the novel, the name of the house will take on a heavy irony. Pip will only have had enough of Satis house, when the building is destroyed and the ground it is built on becomes Estella's last remaining possession.[GE 459] Estella airs her knowledge of the origin of Satis, but the exact derivation is obscure; Greek, Latin or Hebrew 'or all three' are 'all one' to her.⁸³ She puns on 'one', closing the conversation by irony 'They must have been easily satisfied in those days, I should think.' [GE 51], herself using the root satis in her sentence. Then she stops the dialogue telling Pip not to loiter. Pip will have to live with the mysterious origins of many things, the source of his great expectations for example, but he has been made aware of connotation, irony inexact origins and the 'mystery' of words. For him there will be nothing satisfactory or satisfying about Miss Havisham's house.

After he has met Miss Havisham, Pip is commanded to call Estella:

To stand in the dark in a mysterious passage of an unknown house, bawling Estella to a scornful young lady neither visible nor responsive, and feeling it a dreadful liberty so to roar out her name, was almost as bad as playing to order. But, she answered at last, and her light came along the dark passage like a star.

[GE 54]

This is the first time Pip learns her name. He acts under compulsion, shouting her name in the dark according to the command of Miss Havisham. The naming of Estella is almost as powerful as Pip's own first voicing of his own name in the novel at the command of the unknown convict under the threat that Pip will have his throat cut (and be silenced for ever). At the hands of Miss Havisham, Pip will undergo a more sophisticated form of torment, his agony will be social and psychological rather than that induced by physical force. When Pip calls Estella for the first time, it is as if he is calling her into being as an object of desire. 'Her light came along the dark passage like a star.' This indicates the connotations of her name, starlight is cold, distant and beautiful. Estella's attributes are indicated by her name. Pip and the reader are being educated to be aware of the implications of names.

When once Estella enters the room, Pip hears himself referred to in the third person, after Estella is told to play cards with him. 'With this boy! Why, he is a common labouring-boy!' [GE 55] Pip will recall these words. During the game, Estella remarks:

'He calls the knaves, Jacks, this boy!' said Estella with disdain, before our first game was

out. 'And what coarse hands he has! And what thick boots!'

[GE 55]

As a proper noun the Oxford English Dictionary defines Jack as 'a familiar by-form of the name John; hence a generic proper name for any representative of the common people.' While as a common noun it had the now obsolete meaning of 'a man of the common people, a lad, fellow, chap, especially a low-bred or ill-mannered fellow, a "knave"'. In cards jack was the name for the knave of trumps in a game called 'all-fours' The OED cites Cotton's Complete Gamester (1674-80), later the word was generalise to refer to any knave in cards. Dickens' usage here in Great Expectations is cited as an authority. So ironically Pip's unknowing social gaffe serves to reflect the changing state of the language in a particularly socially mobile society. The novel was first in print in 1860, since then there has clearly been a shift in social semiotics, for no social stigma is now attached to the term jack in bourgeois usage. Indeed, knave while acceptable, now seems more uncommon. Differentiation between language norms is made by such small markers, so it is hardly remarkable that Dickens should be so acutely aware of them. After his visit to Miss Havisham, Pip is still a common labouring-boy, but the crucial difference is that he now knows himself to be so. If he is to enter the world of Estella, then he must speak her language.

This becomes a lesson on the arbitrary and social nature of language. Pip learns of social difference as his own language is estranged, he will become alienated from the

language of Joe who has taught him the card game and taught him to call those cards 'Jacks'.

I had never thought of being ashamed of my hands before; but I began to consider them a very indifferent pair. Her contempt for me was so strong, that it became infectious, and I caught it.

[GE 55]

While social snobbery is depicted in this metaphor as a disease, Pip does 'catch it', he learns to see himself through Estella's eyes, speak about himself in her language and in so doing adopts her values, her valuation of himself. After their game, 'she denounced me for a stupid, clumsy labouring-boy.' [GE 55]. Estella's language is repeated in Pip's self-reproaches when he is at last alone.

I took the opportunity of being alone in the courtyard, to look at my course hands and my common boots. My opinion of those accessories was not favourable. They had never troubled me before, but they troubled me now, as vulgar appendages. I determined to ask Joe why he had ever taught me to call those picture-cards, Jacks, which ought to be called knaves. I wished Joe had been rather more genteelly brought up, and then I should have been so too.

[GE 57]

These sentiments are repeated in the last paragraph of the chapter as Pip trudges home [GE 60].

Pip takes his lesson on language and social identity to heart, for he never again lapses from bourgeois linguistic norms. Herbert Pocket needs to correct Pip's table manners, but not his speech. He, in common with other working-class Dickensian heroes and heroines, always speaks with acceptable middle-class accents and sentence structures, unlike those of their family or social milieu. That Oliver Twist, Lizzie Hexam, or Pip should do so is hardly realistic, but since Dickens has identified with them and expects his readers to

do so, the power of language stereotypes is stronger than mere verisimilitude.⁸⁴ They are signified as pure and good by their unadulterated language. The single tiny substitution of 'Jack' for 'knave' is Pip's only deviation from the middle-class norm and even that is presented via Estella: the reader never hears Pip's lapse in his own voice. Pip's growing estrangement from his own linguistic community in the village is marked by the hypercorrection - an intensification and over exaggeration of the bourgeois norm made by Trabb's boy who parodies Pip's language and behaviour as 'a gentleman.' 'Don't know yah, don't know yah, pon my soul don't know yah!' [GE 232] This may be taken as the revenge of the common people upon Pip, who had adopted the language of the middle-classes along with his gentleman's suits. These disclosures may also be taken as an act of revenge by the adult narrator upon his younger self, for Pip's narrative is dialogic in that the voices of the young Pip who experiences and the adult Pip who judges his younger self and withholds narrative information are intermingled.

When Pip returns home, on being questioned by Pumblechook and Mrs Joe, he makes up an elaborate fantasy in order to avoid disclosing his strange humiliating experience. He admits the truth to Joe though, who tells him that 'lies is lies.... Don't you tell no more of 'em, Pip. That ain't the way to get out of being common, old chap.' [GE 65] But he keeps Pip's confidence.

When Joe is commanded to visit Miss Havisham, in order for Pip to be apprenticed, they both are ignored by Estella, once she has admitted them. Joe, uncomfortable in his Sunday

suit, takes his hat off as soon as he sees Estella. Miss Havisham begins to question Joe, seeking to confirm his relationship to Pip: 'You are the husband of the sister of this boy?' [GE 94], but as Joe remains speechless, she is forced to repeat her question.

'You are the husband,' repeated Miss Havisham, 'of the sister of this boy?'

It was very aggravating; but, throughout the interviews, Joe persisted in addressing Me instead of Miss Havisham.

'Which I mean to say, Pip,' Joe now observed, in a manner that was at once expressive of forcible argumentation, strict confidence, and great politeness, 'as I have married your sister, and I were at the time what you might call (if you was any ways inclined) a single man.'

[GE 94]

Miss Havisham, undeterred, asks further questions, as if Joe had replied to her.

'Has the boy... ever made any objection? does he like the trade?'

'Which is well known to yourself, Pip,' returned Joe, strengthening his former mixture of argumentation, confidence, and politeness, 'that it were the wish of your own heart.' (I saw the idea suddenly break upon him that he would adapt his epitaph to the occasion, before he went on to say) 'And there weren't no objection on your part, and Pip it were the great wish of your heart!'

It was quite in vain for me to endeavour to make him sensible that he ought to speak to Miss Havisham. The more I made faces and gestures to him to do it, the more confidential, argumentative, and polite, he persisted in being to Me.

[GE 94]

Joe is addressing Pip, not as he usually does as a fellow sufferer from Mrs Joe on the Rampage, but as if Pip embodied Miss Havisham and the deference and caution necessary in speaking to her are transferred to Pip himself. As Joe refuses to speak to Miss Havisham, replying through Pip, the boy is ashamed.

One obvious explanation for Joe's strange behaviour is that he is so ill at ease when confronted with his social superiors, that he is embarrassed to speak to them. Miss Havisham is unknown and frightening so Joe in an agony of terror and wonder speaks through Pip.⁸⁵ Pip is ashamed of Joe, standing awkwardly in his Sunday best, unable or unwilling to reply to Miss Havisham. Yet there is a better explanation of Joe's actions than this, one which keeps his natural dignity. For besides not speaking to Miss Havisham, Joe does not hand the indentures over to her, when she asks if he has brought them, but instead hands them to Pip. Pip in turn gives them to Miss Havisham.

'You expected,' said Miss Havisham, as she looked them over, 'no premium with the boy?'

'Joe!' I remonstrated; for he made no reply at all. 'Why don't you answer---'

'Pip,' returned Joe, cutting me short as if he were hurt, 'which I mean to say that were not a question requiring an answer betwixt yourself and me, and which you know the answer to be full well No. You know it to be No, Pip, and wherefore should I say it?'

Miss Havisham glanced at him as if she understood what he really was, better than I had thought possible, seeing what he was there; and took up a little bag from the table beside her.

'Pip has earned a premium here,' she said, 'and here it is. There are five-and-twenty guineas in this bag. Give it to your master, Pip!'

[GE 95]

It would seem from this that Miss Havisham understands Joe 'as he really was' while little Pip cannot understand while Joe will not speak and so is ashamed of him. An apprenticeship is a contract between master and an apprentice who is bound to his master and entitled to instruction for a term of years. Normally a premium would be paid to the master by his apprentice (or on behalf of the apprentice) as consideration - a fee for the promise of instruction. Joe

was willing to teach Pip for nothing, he treated the boy as his own. Joe hands the indentures to Pip who hands them to Miss Havisham, she seeming to understand what Joe has in mind, hands the money to Pip who gives it to Joe. Joe does not accept money from Miss Havisham, she must sense that he would refuse it, as he indeed refuses money offered by Jaggers to cancel the indentures when Pip has come into his expectations. [GE 130 & 134] Joe is not entering into a contract with Miss Havisham, for he treats the money as Pip's 'liberal present'- a gift without any reciprocal obligation. It would seem that Joe is refusing politely to have anything to do with Miss Havisham. Pip is his friend, they are not blood relations and Joe treats the boy as his son (except that he does not exercise patriarchal authority over him). Miss Havisham in common with the strange visitor to the Three Jolly Bargemen [GE 71] wants to define their social relationship: 'You are the husband of the sister of the boy?' [GE 94]. Joe is able to take Miss Havisham's money because he sees it as a gift from Pip, not from her; while she presents it to Pip as wages - 'Pip has earned a premium here' - presumably earned by 'playing'[GE 95] Joe thus does not obligate himself to Miss Havisham.

'This is very liberal on your part, Pip,' said Joe, 'and it is as such received and grateful welcome, though never looked for, far nor near nor nowheres. And now, old chap,' said Joe conveying to me a sensation first of burning and then of freezing, for I felt as if that familiar expression were applied to Miss Havisham; 'and now, old chap, may we do our duty! May you and me do our duty, both on us by one and another and by them which your liberal present - have- conveyed- to be- for the satisfaction of mind - of- them as never-' Here Joe showed that he felt he had fallen into frightful difficulties, until he triumphantly rescued himself with the words, 'and from myself far be it!' These words had such a round and

convincing sound for him that he repeated them twice.

[GE 95]

Miss Havisham is referred to as the conveyor of Pip's 'liberal present', she would intrude money and a specific family relationship into Joe's and Pip's informality. Joe's linguistic strategy with Miss Havisham is similar to the financial; he refuses any social contact with her by instead speaking only to Pip. She recognises this by saying good-bye only to Pip [GE 95].

Wittgenstein suggested that:

If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgements.⁸⁶

Allowing this to be so provides a cogent answer to Pip's question : 'Joe ! ... Why don't you answer?' [GE 95]. Joe avoids speaking directly to Miss Havisham, because he understands that to communicate with her, to engage in dialogue, would demand conversation on her terms, embodying her values. They cannot talk as equals, Miss Havisham has the power of money, status and education on her side. Joe does not demean himself by assuming the powerless state of bondsman to Miss Havisham's master. He is his own master, a master blacksmith. He keeps his dignity, speaking to Pip with love tempered with the 'argumentation, confidence and politeness' [GE 94] due to Miss Havisham who is the real addressee of his remarks to Pip. In this situation, Joe must say something, like Pip faced with Mrs Joe and Pumblechook, he cannot stay silent, so Joe subverts the norms of discourse between the empowered and the powerless. In such dialogues,

the question and answer format is fundamental, confession backed by force is the norm. For Dickens, this mode is the normal condition of language and not the impartial Socratic dialogue which is implicit in many schools of linguistics. Dickens' interlocutors don't just talk, they are more often than not concerned with power and knowledge and ferreting out the truth and the truth of a person's identity and origins is usually central to any Dickens plot.⁸⁷ While such disclosure has been a constant source of fictional plots, one might speculate that its centrality in Victorian fiction was a symptom of increased social and geographical mobility with the consequence that the ancestry and provenance of people was often unknown to others they met.⁸⁸

Joe himself appears to have understood Pip's experience at Satis House when he counsels the boy, who is distressed at having lied about what happened.

'Whether common ones as to callings and earnings...
mightn't be the better of continuing for to keep
company with common ones, instead of going out to
play with uncommon ones....

[GE 66]

But such an inquiry cannot be pursued without putting Mrs Joe on the Rampage. Joe's strategy with Miss Havisham is one of resistance, he is proof against her language as Pip is not. That Joe was not simply abashed by his betters can be shown by the short shrift he gives to Jaggers, when the lawyer attempts to give him money on releasing Pip from his indentures [GE 132-134], or his second meeting with Miss Havisham which is reported on [GE 211] In telling Pip of this conversation, Joe adopts 'an air of legal formality', his dealings with her are brisk and direct. (She asks him to

tell Pip that Estella has returned home and would be glad to see him.)

Her expression air then as follering: "Mr Gargery. You air in correspondence with Mr. Pip? " Having had a letter from you, I were able to say "I am." (When I married your sister, Sir, I said, "I will;" and when I answered your friend, Pip, I said, "I am."

[GE 211]

Most remarkably, given Joe's good honest nature, and notwithstanding his warning to Pip on the dangers of lies, when they return home to Mr Pumblechook and Mrs Joe, Joe himself proceeds to lie and seeks the collusion of Pip in the deception. [GE 96] Joe's motive is an old one, to keep Mrs Joe from going on a Rampage. Pip's opinion is one of admiration: 'I have reason to think that Joe's intellects were brightened by the encounter they had passed through, and that on our way to Pumblechook's he invented a subtle and deep design.' [GE 96].

'Miss Havisham,' said Joe, with a fixed look at me, like an effort of remembrance, 'made it wery partick'ler that we should give her - were it compliments or respects, Pip?'

'Compliments,' I said.

'Which that were my own belief,' answered Joe - 'her compliments to Mrs. J. Gargery--'

'Much good they'll do me! observed my sister; but rather gratified too.

'And wishing,' pursued Joe, with another fixed look at me, like another effort of remembrance, 'that the state of Miss Havisham's elth were sitch as would have-- allowed, were it, Pip?'

'Of her having the pleasure,' I added.

'Of ladies' company,' said Joe. And drew a long breath.

[GE 96]

All this is, of course, an utter fabrication. It differs from Pip's lies in being a good deal more plausible, but it is no less successful in evading Mrs Joe's wrath. Pip is being schooled in adult's ways of being economical with the

truth. Joe may be a simple fellow, but Dickens gives him subtle rhetorical techniques for use in his power struggles; for example he releases the true amount of Miss Havisham's bounty step by step as a skilled orator:

'What would the present company say to ten pound?'

'They'd say,' returned my sister curtly, 'pretty well. Not too much, but pretty well.'

'It's more than that then,' said Joe.

[GE 97]

He proceeds via twenty pounds , then more, to the true amount. Joe's behaviour is an indication to Pip that direct truth telling is not always advisable, that the rhetorical nature of language can be used to negotiate power. Of course as a good honest man, Joe brings up Pip to tell the truth; what is permitted to adults is not always permitted to children. A 'white lie' may be justified on occasion, as indeed when Pip allows Magwitch to die under the misapprehension that Pip will have his money. [GE 424] Pip does not lie directly, but nor does he tell the truth, out of kindness. In his way, Joe the blacksmith has demonstrated as many useful rhetorical skills to Pip as the novel's other father-figure, Jaggers.

Bakhtin, in 'Discourse in the Novel' draws a general conclusion about the linguistic sources of comedy in the English novel:

Comic style (of the English sort) is based... on the stratification of common language and on the possibilities available for isolating from these strata, to one degree or another, one's own intentions, without ever completely merging with them. It is precisely the diversity of speech, and not the unity of a normative shared language that, is the ground of style. [Bakhtin's emphasis] ⁸⁹

Bakhtin argues that '... the primary source of language usage in the comic novel is a highly specific treatment of "common language."'90

This "common language"- usually the average norm of spoken and written language for a given social group- is taken by the author precisely as the common view, as the verbal approach to people and things normal for a given sphere of society, as the going point of view and the going value. To one degree or another, the author distances himself from this common language, he steps back and objectifies it, forcing his own intentions to refract and diffuse themselves through the medium of this common view that has become embodied in language (a view that is always superficial and frequently hypocritical).⁹¹

The values and attitudes of the author, then are diffused through stereotypical language. Bakhtin here does not distinguish between the implied author and the actual writer of the text, a position which after New Critical work on irony, may seem rather crude. However, Bakhtin's linguistics is one of process, for he insists that the relation between the style of the author and the "common language" is not static, but always dynamic.

... the author exaggerates, now strongly, now weakly, one or another aspect of the "common language," sometimes abruptly exposing its inadequacy to its object and sometimes, on the contrary, becoming one with it, maintaining an almost imperceptible distance, sometimes even directly forcing it to reverberate with his own "truth," which occurs when the author completely merges his own voice with the common view. As a consequence of such a merger, the aspects of common language, which in the given situation had been parodically exaggerated or had been treated as mere things, undergo change.⁹²

To illustrate his point, Bakhtin analyses a passage of Little Dorrit

The conference was held at four or five o'clock in the afternoon, when all the region of Harley

Street, Cavendish Square, was resonant of carriage-wheels and double-knocks. It had reached this point when Mr. Merdle came home, from his daily occupation of causing the British name to be more and more respected in all parts of the civilised globe, capable of the apprehension of world-wide commercial enterprise and gigantic combinations of skill and capital. For though nobody knew with the least precision what Mr. Merdle's business was, except that it was to coin money, these were the terms in which everybody defended it on all ceremonious occasions, and which it was the last new polite reading of the parable of the camel and the needle's eye to accept without inquiry.[Bakhtin's emphasis]⁹³

[LD 394]

Bakhtin locates several sorts of discourse within this passage:

The italicized portion represents a parodic stylization of the language of ceremonial speeches (in parliaments and at banquets. The shift into this style is prepared for by the sentences's construction, which from the very beginning is kept within bounds by a somewhat ceremonious epic tone. Further on-and already in the language of the author (and consequently in a different style)-the parodic meaning of the ceremoniousness of Merdle's labors becomes apparent: such a characterization turns out to be "another's speech," to be taken only in quotation marks ("these were the terms in which everybody defined it on all ceremonious occasions").⁹⁴

Of course, in the Dickens passage no actual quotation marks appear. Bakhtin states that

...the speech of another is introduced into the author's discourse (the story) in concealed form... but this is not just not another's speech in the same "language"- it is another's utterance in a language that is itself "other" to the author as well, in the archaicized language of oratorical genres associated with hypocritical official celebrations.⁹⁵

The discourses located by Bakhtin appear to be suggested by the passage itself: "these were the terms in which everybody defined it on all ceremonious occasions..." and by Bakhtin's

experience and knowledge. He never provides us with any textual material outside the novel, to compare the discourses, instead he merely asserts that this is the language of ceremonial speeches in parliament and at banquets). Likewise when he states that the parody in the sentence is kept in bounds from the first by "a somewhat ceremonious epic tone" he provides neither detailed examples from the passage, nor from any corpus of public speeches. Such knowledge depends on the location of words like "resonant" and the passive construction of the sentence which Bakhtin emphasises for an identification of social register. After considering another two passages, Bakhtin describes what he terms a "double-accented, double-styled hybrid construction"⁹⁶

What we are calling a hybrid construction is an utterance that belongs, by its grammatical (syntactic) and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two "languages," two semantic and axiological belief systems.... there is no formal-compositional and syntactic boundary between these utterances, styles, languages, belief systems; the division of voices and languages takes place within the limits of a single syntactic whole, often within the limits of a simple sentence. It frequently happens that even one and the same word will belong simultaneously to two languages, two belief systems that intersect in a hybrid construction- and, consequently, the word has two contradictory meanings, two accents.... hybrid constructions are of enormous significance in novel style.⁹⁷

This concept then, belongs not to linguistics proper, but to Bakhtin's own domain of translinguistics.⁹⁸ As a Dickensian example of this, Bakhtin chooses the single sentence: "But, Mr. Tite Barnacle was a buttoned-up man, and consequently a weighty one." [LD 565]⁹⁹ Bakhtin calls this sentence an example of pseudo-objective motivation, a form for the

concealment of another's speech, here the speech of "current opinion". According to the syntax of the sentence, the logic motivating it seems to belong to the author, but actually the motivation lies within the subjective beliefs of his characters, or of general opinion.¹⁰⁰ The word which Bakhtin has emphasised, consequently should not be ascribed to the author, but to opinion in general, or to the characters present at the dinner.

Pseudo-objective motivation is generally characteristic of novel style, since it is one of the manifold forms for concealing another's speech in hybrid constructions. Subordinate conjunctions and link words ("thus," "because," "for the reason that," "in spite of" and so forth), as well as words used to maintain a logical sequence ("therefore," "consequently," ...) lose their direct authorial intention, take on the flavor of someone else's language, becoming refracted or even completely reified.¹⁰¹

It is not then, Dickens who is suggesting that because Tite Barnacle is taciturn, he is consequently a weighty man, but the persons at the dinner, or general opinion that draws this conclusion. Bakhtin's point may seem to be based on a single word in this isolated sentence, but when the sentence is seen in its context, Bakhtin's remarks are reinforced, rather than undermined.

Mr. Tite Barnacle's view of the business was of a less airy character. He took it ill that Mr. Dorrit had troubled the Department by wanting to pay the money, and considered it a grossly informal thing to do after so many years. But, Mr. Tite Barnacle was a buttoned-up man, and consequently a weighty one. All buttoned-up men are weighty. All buttoned-up men are believed in. Whether or no the reserved and never-exercised power of unbuttoning, fascinates mankind; whether or no wisdom is supposed to condense and augment when buttoned up, and to evaporate when unbuttoned; it is certain that the man to whom importance is accorded is the buttoned-up man. Mr. Tite Barnacle never would have passed for half his current value, unless his coat had been always buttoned-up to his white cravat.

The man's closeness is emphasised and made fun of by his ridiculous name; "Tite" being a homophone of "tight" and barnacle the name of a shellfish which clings tightly to the rocks. The phrase he "considered it a grossly informal thing to do" is clearly Barnacle's unspoken thought, expressed in his own language. After this, Dickens reiterates "buttoned-up", suggesting a public opinion: "All buttoned-up men are weighty. All buttoned-up men are believed in." Dickens then dissolves this opinion by a characteristic rhetorical ploy of his, that of extending a metaphor, then turning the phrase and applying it in a concrete and literal manner. So the metaphor of being "buttoned-up", meaning taciturn is extended, then the phrase is applied literally- "Mr. Tite Barnacle never would have passed for half his current value, unless his coat had been always buttoned up to his white cravat." [LD 566] This image dissolves all the buttoned-up weight of the man into bathos. Barnacle's moral worth is likened to counterfeit or devalued currency: "(he) would never have passed for half his current value..." To "pass" a coin was the offence of causing counterfeit material to circulate. [Oxford English Dictionary] Barnacle, like false coin has not the value his appearance suggests. When Dickens first suggests the public view of Barnacle, he as Bakhtin suggests, seems to merge his own voice with it, in apparently objective judgements. "All buttoned-up men are weighty. All buttoned-up men are believed in." But later, we can see that these sentences are in fact what Bakhtin terms "double-voiced."

Just before his close readings of passages from Little Dorrit, Bakhtin had suggested some of the varieties of language represented and parodied in the comic novel. Among these are legal language, newspaper reports, business jargon, parliamentary speeches, the Bible and sermons.¹⁰² I propose to extend Bakhtin's analysis by considering some of these discourses as used and parodied by Dickens.

In Oliver Twist, thieves' cant is used by the criminal fraternity, most noticeably by the Artful Dodger. When Oliver meets the Dodger for the first time, there is a disparity of language.[OT 46] The Dodger greets Oliver using cant: 'Hullo, my covey, what's the row?' Oliver replies in standard English.

'I am very hungry and tired,' replied Oliver: the tears standing in his eyes as he spoke. 'I have walked a long way. I have been walking these seven days.'

'Walking for sivin days!' said the young gentleman. 'Oh I see. Beak's order, eh? But,' he added, noticing Oliver's look of surprise, 'I suppose you don't know what a beak is, my flash com-pan-ion.'

Oliver mildly replied, that he had always heard a bird's mouth described by the term in question.

'My eyes, how green!' exclaimed the young gentleman. 'Why a beak's a madgst'rate; and when you walk by a beak's order, it's not straight forerd, but always a-going up, and nivr a-coming down agin. Was you never on the mill?'

'What mill?' inquired Oliver.

'What mill!- why, themill - the mill as takes up so little room tha it'll work inside a Stone Jug; and always goes better when the wind's low with people, than when it's high; acos then thy can't get workmen. But come,' said the young gentleman; 'you want grub, and you shall have it. I'm at low-water-mark myself- only one bob and a magpie; but, as far as it goes, I'll fork out and stump. Up with you on your pins. There! Now then! Morrice!

[OT 47]

Many former cant and slang words have now been absorbed into standard English, probably through fashionable use and

through familiarity in popular fiction. The words beak, grub, bob and pins are now familiar, for middle-class Victorian readers they would be much less so. 'Flash language' was not new in fiction at the time, but Dickens had introduced it in a magazine intended for general family reading.¹⁰³ Works like Pierce Egan's Life in London (1821) in which 'Tom and Jerry' make picaresque excursions throughout the capital, exploring a rich high and low-life of racing, boxing, blood-sports, drinking and wenching, had introduced 'Flash Language' to a male reading public, though not to a family audience.¹⁰⁴ This 'Flash language' seems to have been common to both fashionable bucks and those who catered for their needs, while 'Thieves' Cant' may be regarded as a subset of such slang, though as Life in London shows there is considerable overlap in all varieties of 'Flash'. Originally, cant was used by criminals for purposes of secrecy and like any specialised jargon it provides a means of group identity and a selective vocabulary for the particular group interests. The linguist M. A. K. Halliday in an article entitled 'Antilanguages' (1978) explores the mechanisms of underworld and prison languages like cant.¹⁰⁵ He suggests that while secrecy and verbal dexterity are features of these languages their purpose is to strive to maintain an alternative social system, a counter-culture. This seems plausible, and would help to explain the fashion in Georgian society for the language of the underworld and its semi-legitimate periphery, 'Flash' being the lingua franca of this counter-culture. Fashions change and cant, in Dickens, signifies the low, the vulgar, and the criminal. The Dodger addresses Oliver in cant, but gets a reply in the

standard language. It is not necessary to know that a 'covey' or 'cove' was a man, the context helps to define the meaning of the Dodger's question. Words like 'beak' are glossed by the Dodger for the benefit of Oliver, and also for the benefit of the reader. The Dodger's words represented completely in cant would soon perplex and then bore the reader, so a certain amount of exposition is necessary. (Pierce Egan's Life in London uses many explanatory footnotes, a device Dickens skillfully avoids.) The Dodger's last paragraph, though, is not glossed and the reader is forced to guess at the meaning like Oliver. The Dodger's next words, however, are in standard English.

'Going to London....
'Yes.'
'Got any lodgings?'
'No.'
'Money?'
'No.'....
'Do you live in London?' inquired Oliver.
'Yes, I do, when I'm at home,' replied the boy.
'I suppose you want some place to sleep in to-night
don't you?'

[OT 47-48]

The Dodger's ability to switch codes from non-standard to standard forms is familiar from sociolinguistic studies.¹⁰⁶ So there is no need to suppose that the Dodger's switch to standard English is a lack of verisimilitude. The Dodger can use language appropriate for the particular addressee. When, finally, he is up before the magistrates, cant terms are sparse. Instead the Dodger insolently addresses the bench in a parody of the language used by gentlemen, when confronted by an inferior: 'I beg your pardon... did you redress yourself to me, my man?' [OT 300] When asked if he wants to question the witness, the Dodger responds: 'I wouldn't abase

myself by decending to hold no conversation with him.' [OT 300] It is only the malapropism redress and the double negation which marks these sentences as non-standard. Notice also that the spelling used here is standard. The Dodger makes a speech in which the discourse of law and authority is mingled with abuse:

'Do you mean to say anything, you young shaver?'
'No,' replied the Dodger, 'not here, for this ain't the shop for justice; besides which, my attorney is a-breakfasting this morning with the Wice President of the House of Commons; but I shall have something to say elsewhere, and so will he, and so will a wery numerous and 'spectable circle of acquaintance as'll make them beaks wish they'd never been born, or that they'd got their footmen to hang 'em up to their own hat-pegs, afore they let 'em come out this morning to try it upon me. I'll-'

[OT 300]

'My attorney is a-breakfasting this morning with the Wice President' down to 'a wery numerous and 'spectable circle of acquaintance' is in the discourse of authority, but in parodic form. Unobscured by cant terms, the force of the speech is carried home: 'this ain't the shop for justice', which implies that the law is transacted as if in any other shop, like a baker's or butcher's. The Dodger's final words address the bench as if the magistrates were themselves on trial, a neat carnivalised reversal of roles:

'Ah!... it's no use your looking frightened; I won't show you no mercy, not a ha'porth of it. You'll pay for this, my fine fellers. I wouldn't be you for something! I wouldn't go free, now, if you was to fall down on your knees and ask me. Here, carry me off to prison! Take me away!

[OT 300]

The introduction of cant terms here would interfere with the communication of what Dickens has to say to the reader, besides obscuring the parody. Verisimilitude is not so

important in representing the Dodger's speech here. Oliver's and Nancy's speech are both free from cant and other non-standard terms throughout the novel, while this is most implausible, in 'realistic' terms, it is used as a device to establish their goodness amid the evil of the criminal inhabitants of Jacob's Island. Dickens allows the Dodger to speak a relatively standard form on those occasions when he wants to establish empathy (when Dodger befriends Oliver on [OT 47-48] for example, and at Dodger's trial, when Dickens wants to make serious points about the lack of justice in magistrate's courts for the likes of the Dodger). The introduction of cant into Dodger's last speeches would take away the force of the inversion. Dodger born into another social class would have doubtless directed his considerable talents to more socially acceptable ends. Indeed, with his energy, resource, and rhetorical delivery, he might have been a successful lawyer.

Cant terms are liberally sprinkled over the discourse of the two Bow Street Runners, Blathers and Duff who investigate the attempted burglary during which Oliver is shot. They use the word 'crack' for a house-breaking exactly as the criminals do.[OT 200] There is a shared register of language between police and criminals, while it is true that they have to speak of the same things, the effect of this is to suggest that Blathers and Duff are not so very different in outlook from Fagin's gang.¹⁰⁷

Dickens took a particular interest in the specialised language of the law and frequently parodied it in his work. In the following example from The Pickwick Papers, there is a

communication lapse between the client and the lawyer which depends upon the mechanisms I have described as 'Negative Linguistics' or x-communication. Tony and Sam Weller have gone to the disreputable poor man's lawyer Solomon Pell for advice about what to do with the late Mrs. Weller's will.

"...give me the dockymment, Sammy," said Mr. Weller, taking the will from his son, who appeared to enjoy the interview amazingly.

"Wot we rek-vire, Sir, is a probe o' this here."

"Probate, my dear Sir, probate," said Pell.

"Vell, Sir," replied Mr. Weller sharply, "probe and probe it, is wery much the same; if you don't understand wot I mean, Sir, I des-say I can find them as does."

"No offence I hope, Mr. Weller," said Poll, meekly. "Your are the executor I see," he added, casting his eyes over the paper.

"I am, Sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"These other gentlemen, I presume, are legatees, are they?" enquired Pell with a congratulatory smile.

"Sammy is a leg-at-ease," replied Mr. Weller; "these other gen'lmen is friends o' mine, just come to see fair;-a kind of umpires."

"Oh!" said Pell, "very good. I have no objections I'm sure. I shall want a matter of five pound of you before I begin, ha! ha! ha!"

[PP848-9]

In The Language of Dickens (1970), G. L. Brook asserted that 'Most people who use language beyond their strength are occasionally guilty of malapropisms...' ¹⁰⁸ and then made the following extraordinary comment:

Malapropisms may be found combined with other features of word-formation, such as back-formation. When Tony Weller uses leg-at-ease for legatee ...he is guilty of the same confusion between singular and plural as were those who added the word pea to the English language by wrongly assuming that pease was plural. ¹⁰⁹

The comment is extraordinary, because it ignores the satirical context of the 'malapropisms' which are of course put deliberately into the mouth of Tony Weller by Dickens.

Pell preys upon those unaccustomed to legal practise, here he drinks and dines at Tony Weller's expense, besides relieving him of five pounds for the "consultation". Weller Senior is prey to Pell precisely because he does not understand legal terminology. The connotations of these puns are rather more interesting than the fact that singular of legatees is legatee. The humour, the misunderstanding, and the grammar are inter-related and it is beside the point to separate them. Probe and probate are cognate (both derive from Latin probare meaning 'to prove'). Weller understands probate, a word with which he is not familiar as probe it, producing the phrase a probe o' this here. Probate and probe it are seemingly homophones in Weller's accent. Though legatees and leg-at-ease are a similar case, the connotations of the written signifier leg-at-ease is at once inappropriate to the context of legatees (where probe and probate were much closer in meaning). However, a-leg-at ease is fitting in its description of Sam Weller perfectly at ease in the most difficult circumstances. Weller's use of umpires as a singular collective noun 'a kind of umpires' suggests he is unfamiliar with its use, like 'legatee' and 'probate'. It further suggests that the system of legal practice is something of a game, needing umpires to see fair play. Certainly the reader is encouraged to laugh at Tony Weller's mistakes, but there is also a satirical view of the law and its abuse. In his involvement with the law, Weller is drawn into the use of appropriate (or in his case inappropriate) language. Law has its particular register, which is used among professionals with precise meanings, but being often opaque to those outside, can be easily used to mislead them.

There is little doubt that Sam Weller who stopped his father putting the will into the fire, as he had first intended and who protests at Tony's interest in the machinery of 'Old Baileys, and Solvent Courts, and alleybis' [PP 845], knows perfectly well that Pell is cheating his father, for Sam 'appeared to enjoy the interview amazingly' [PP 848]. But Sam also knows that the formalities must be complied with [PP 845]. Tony Weller is also aware that he is paying Pell to understand him, and if he does not, then Weller is free to take his custom elsewhere. Pell does not have it all his own way but is forced to listen 'meekly' [PP 848].

Another example of Dickens' use of specialised registers is demonstrated by the following passage from Dombey and Son:

Susan accepting this kind offer, Mr. Toots conducted her to his dwelling, where they were received by the Matron in question who fully justified his character of her, and by the Chicken who at first supposed, on seeing a lady in the vehicle, that Mr. Dombey had been doubled up, agreeably to his old recommendation, and Miss Dombey abducted. This gentleman awakened in Miss Nipper some considerable astonishment; for, having been defeated by the Larkey Boy, his visage was in a state of such great dilapidation, as to be hardly presentable in society with comfort to the beholders. The Chicken himself attributed this punishment to his having had the misfortune to get into Chancery early in the proceedings, when he was severely fibbed by the Larkey one, and heavily grassed. But it appeared from the published records of that great contest that the Larkey Boy had it all his own way from the beginning, and that the Chicken had been tapped, and bunged, and had received pepper, and had been made groggy, and had come up piping, and had endured a complication of similar strange inconveniences, until he had been gone into and finished.

[DS 597]

This passage draws upon the language of pugilism and the associated language used to write about prize-fighting in

popular papers of the time. Here, Dickens uses free indirect speech to represent the language of prize-fighting and to satirise it. It employs what Bakhtin terms a 'double-accented, double-styled hybrid construction'¹¹⁰

in which the author's own values are introduced into the reported speech in a concealed form. Pugilistic terms were brought into print by cheap pamphlets reporting fights and by sporting journals such as Bell's Life in London initiated by Pierce Egan. Egan also wrote Boxania, which was extremely successful, when it appeared in parts [1812-13] then reprinted in volumes with additions [1815-29]. As in the case of thieves' cant, Dickens' innovation was to introduce such language to novels intended for family reading. Most of the terms used here are found in the Oxford English Dictionary, but as they were likely to have been unfamiliar to readers who did not take sporting papers, their exact meaning would be obscure even to contemporary readers. Their function is to create 'an image of' pugilism, an impression of their meaning is apparent from the context. The first term "doubled up" is obvious in meaning, and has now entered everyday speech, losing its boxing origin - one can be doubled up in pain caused by illness, rather than a physical blow. Chancery is a term describing the position of the head when held under the opponent's arm while his other hand remains free to punch the victim in the face repeatedly, during this the victim is unable to retaliate effectively. It is a metaphorical extension from the court of Chancery, whose operations were depicted in Bleak House. The Oxford English Dictionary gives the derivation as 'From the tenacity and absolute control with which the Court of Chancery holds

anything, and the certainty of cost and loss to property "in Chancery."' Its slang use for a vicious prize-fighting hold indicates a disrespectful attitude towards the legal system, its humourous metaphor a resistance to authority. The first Oxford English Dictionary entry for the word is from Marryat in 1832 where it is used figuratively for an awkward predicament. Partridge's Dictionary of Slang gives prize-fighting examples dating from 1815. (Dombey and Son was published in 1847-8).

Fib in this context means 'to deliver blows in quick succession'; the first Oxford English Dictionary citation is dated 1665. Grassed, an obvious metaphorical extension from being knocked down on the grass, is given its first Oxford English Dictionary entry taken from this passage of Dombey and Son. Bunged means to close up an eye with a blow; clearly deriving from bunging a bottle or cask, while Piping means breathing heavily. Received pepper means to get rough treatment especially by hard punching. The Oxford English Dictionary cites the Sporting Magazine of 1820 "Spring ... gave the big one pepper at the ropes." The pungent or biting quality of pepper is given as the origin of this phrase.

Dickens' penultimate clause, "and had endured a complication of similar strange inconveniences" indicates that these prize-fighting terms were unfamiliar to the family reader, it also indicates a satirical attitude to the language of prize-fighting and its representation in "the published records of that great contest." Such phrases and the initial "his visage was in a state of such great dilapidation, as to be hardly presentable in society" show the author distancing himself from the Chicken's language; dilapidation makes his face

sound as if it was a building! The next paragraph of the novel develops the satirical treatment of the Chicken:

After a good repast, and much hospitality, Susan set out for the coach-office in another cabriolet, with Mr. Toots inside, as before, and the Chicken on the box, who, whatever distinction he conferred on the little party by the moral weight and heroism of his character, was scarcely ornamental to it, physically speaking, on account of his plasters; which were numerous. But the Chicken had registered a vow, in secret, that he would never leave Mr. Toots (who was secretly pining to get rid of him), for any less consideration than the goodwill and fixtures of a public-house; and being ambitious to go into that line, and drink himself to death as soon as possible, he felt it his cue to make his company unacceptable.

The phrase "whatever distinction he conferred on the little party by the moral weight and heroism of his character", is clearly ironic. There is a comic discrepancy between the heroic language used to describe pugilists and the inappropriately named Chicken with his face covered with plasters. The last sentence would appear to be free indirect speech representing the fighter's thoughts; but here Dickens does not employ pugilistic slang, but legal terms. The Chicken had registered a vow, consideration is essential to any contract, it is a thing given or done as equivalent by the person to whom a promise is made, fixtures and goodwill are also drawn from legal language. The phrase 'and drink himself to death as soon as possible' describing the height of the Chicken's ambition, cannot be seen as the fighter's own words, but are the author's who is hostile to him. The Chicken is represented as mercenary by the alien legal and commercial language, finally he is derided.

Thieves' cant, legal jargon, and the language of pugilism were all discourses associated with particular occupations and their associated modes of life. Clearly Dickens took considerable delight in mastering a particular vocabulary, in order to write within that mode of discourse. Mr Toodle's railway terms in Dombey and Son, the circus in Hard Times and seafaring in David Copperfield all demonstrate this tendency. But in the discourses I have examined, especially the Dodger's speech to the magistrates and the introduction of legal and commercial language to the pugilistic jargon of the Game Chicken, the 'double-voiced' technique described by Bakhtin can be seen. Here language is parodied for satirical purposes. This tendency can be found in the treatment of the discourse of English grammar itself, throughout Dickens' work. The discourse of grammar is especially interesting, since it provides a model of representing the structure and rules of use for a language. Since Dickens' own writing has frequently been condemned as ungrammatical, his representation and parodisation of grammar may be read as a reply to these critics.

W.E. Aytoun's sarcastic 'Advice to an Intending Serialist', published in Blackwood's Magazine in 1846, attacked Dickens without naming him for producing a farrago of 'euphonious appellations': 'Tox and Wox, Whibble, Toozle, Whopper, Sniggleshaw, Guzzlerit, Gingerthorp, Mugswitch, Smungle, Yelkins, Fizgig, Parksnap, Grubsby, Shoutowker, Hogswash and Quiltrogus.'¹¹¹ Aytoun, Professor of Belles-Lettres at Edinburgh, purported to be giving advice from a practising novelist to an aspirant:

You have, and I think most wisely, undertaken to frame a new code of grammar and of construction for yourself; and the light and airy effect of this happy innovation is conspicuous not only in every page but in almost every sentence of your work. There is no slipshod here - only a fine, manly disregard of syntax... and I cannot doubt that you are destined to become the founder of a far higher and more enduring school of composition, than that which was approved of and employed by the fathers of our English literature. Your work will be translated... into French and German... will be received in the saloons of Paris and Vienna - it may be of St Petersburg - as conveying accurate pictures of our everyday English life; and I need hardly remark how much that impression must tend to elevate our national character in the eyes of an intelligent foreigner. Labouring under old and absurd prejudices, he perhaps at present believes that we are a sober, unmercurial people, given to domestic habits, to the accumulation of wealth, and to our own internal improvements.... You will convince him that a great part of our existence is spent about the doors of theatres, in tap-rooms, pot-houses, and other haunts which I need not stay to particularize. You will prove to him that the British constitution rests upon no sure foundation, and that it is based upon injustice and tyranny.¹¹²

There is a fine irony to this, when one considers the interests of Dostoevsky, Kafka and Joyce in Dickens. Aytoun was entirely correct in his remarks on syntax. In political economy, Dickens was a reformer, but in language he was an anarchist. Professor Aytoun rightly saw him as the enemy. Victorian scholars and teachers saw writing as defining the correct standard of language, their grammars were grammars of written discourse. Dickens' transgression was to bring the grammar of speech into written language in ways it had scarcely been done before.

Grammar may be seen in Foucauldian terms as an attempt to discipline language, as an attempt to impose order and regularity upon a polymorphous mass. In Dombey and Son, young Paul Dombey admits to total ignorance of Latin grammar

when he is taken to Doctor Blimber's. As an excuse he explains he had spent a considerable time walking in conversation with an old man.

'I couldn't learn a Latin Grammar when I was out, every day, with old Glubb. I wish you'd tell old Glubb to come and see me, if you please.'

'What a dreadful low name!' said Mrs Blimber. 'Unclassical to a degree! Who is the monster, child?'

'What Monster?' inquired Paul.

'Glubb,' said Mrs. Blimber, with great disrelish.

[DS 150]

Paul explains that old Glubb used to tell him fantastic tales of the sea. Dr. Blimber, unimpressed, remarks 'this is bad, but study will do much,' accordingly Paul is put to Latin grammar: 'names of things, declensions of articles and substantives, exercises thereon, and preliminary rules- a trifle of orthography....' Paul struggles:

'If you please,' said Paul, 'I think if I might sometimes talk a little to old Glubb, I should be able to do better.'

'Nonsense, Dombey,' said Miss Blimber. 'I couldn't hear of it. This is not the place for Glubbs of any kind.'

She sets him systematically to learn his theme.

There are two contradictory attitudes to language here: language as polymorphous play and language as system. Old Glubb, who has not been mentioned in the novel before, embodies the play of language, but the infinite play of possibilities in language may become delire, a Humpty-Dumpty world of delusion and insight.¹¹³ Old Glubb has enthralled young Paul Dombey, as Dickens was himself fascinated by the often frightening tales of his nurse.¹¹⁴ Glubb, whose phonemes Dickens relishes in repeating, taking a fetishistic delight in the pure signifier, is to Miss Blimber, 'a

Monster', his name is 'dreadfully low' and 'unclassical', his stories fantastic nonsense. Classical grammar is the paradigm for systematic analysis of language. Indeed much European grammar is the result of applying the categories of classical languages to 'modern languages', a process which often resulted in quite inappropriate taxonomy.¹¹⁵ At Dr Blimber's the classics are taught in an arid manner, after a year, his pupils are convinced '... that all the fancies of the poets, and lessons of the sages, were a mere collection of words and grammar, and had no other meaning in the world.' [DS 144] The division between old Glubb and the grammar book is also a class division. Blimber's young men are taught knowledge appropriate for gentlemen, old Glubb is manifestly one of the common people. Language for Dickens runs wild beyond the control of prescriptive grammar, its structure is a dynamic fluid mass, often as in Joyce, it is polymorphously perverse. When Dickens writes about grammar it is to parody and ruin its categories as in the exposition given by the incompetent schoolmaster Squeers to Peg Sliderskew, which I shall now examine.

Dickens' parody of the discourse of Nineteenth Century grammar may be used to illustrate Bakhtin's methods of reading a novel from the past. In the following passage from Nicholas Nickleby, the incompetent schoolmaster, Wackford Squeers on entering the room of Peg Sliderskew, gives an inadvertantly parodised exposition of grammar in which its categories are slid askew:

'Well, my Slider!' said Mr. Squeers, jocularly.
'Is that you?' inquired Peg.
'Ah! It's me, and me's the first person
singular, nominative case, agreeing with the verb

"it's," and governed by Squeers understood, as a acorn, a hour; but when the h is sounded, the a only is to be used, as a and, a art, a ighway,' replied Mr. Squeers, quoting at random from the grammar. 'At least, if it isn't, you don't know any better. And if it is, I've done it accidentally.'

[NN 750]

Some of the parody is obvious, but much depends on the meaning of traditional grammatical terms, some of which are now uncommon. Since English relies primarily upon word order and prepositions rather than inflections, to make grammatical distinctions, the application of Latinate case descriptions has now fallen from favour. As will be shown, Dickens is parodying an actual grammar here, for the grammar from which Squeers quotes at random is that of Lindley Murray [1795, 37th edition 1824], which was a popular school textbook. This prescriptive grammar was inspired by Robert Lowth's Short introduction to English Grammar [1762] which in turn applied classical models.¹¹⁶

Agreeing is a grammatical term, meaning

To be in 'concord'; to take the same gender, number, case or person; as happens in inflected languages to words in apposition, and to substantives and their attributive words, whether adjectives, verb or relative. [Oxford English Dictionary]

The Oxford English Dictionary cites Mason's English Grammar (1881) "Pronouns must agree in gender, number, and person with the nouns for which they stand."

Governed means "To require (a noun or pronoun) to be in a certain case, or a verb to be in a certain mood; to be necessarily followed by (a certain case or mood)." [Oxford English Dictionary] Whitney's Essentials of English Grammar

(1877) is cited: "We speak of both verbs and prepositions as governing in the objective the word that is their object."

Understood means "Implied though not expressed" [Oxford English Dictionary] An annotated text of Xenophon of 1848 is cited:

Observe the adverb between the article and the understood noun, supplying the place of an adjective.

The subject "Squeers" is understood in the phrase "It's me." The pronoun substituting for the name. "Me" is, of course, not the nominative, but the accusative or dative form of the first person singular. From examination of Lindley Murray it appears that "It's me" was regarded as a vulgar colloquialism. Murray uses the form "It was I." as an example.

The neuter pronoun,... is frequently joined in explanatory sentences, with a noun or pronoun of the masculine or feminine gender; as "It was I."¹¹⁷

Squeers, as a teacher, clearly would have been expected to produce "It is I" using the nominative form in preference to the accusative. The reason for the preference was that in Latin the verb to be is followed by the nominative case. ¹¹⁸ Lindley Murray does not even mention the use of the contraction it's for it is. Indeed contractions only occur once in his grammar, where the form 'tis is allowed. The Oxford English Dictionary terms it's the common colloquial form, the first citation being from George Eliot's Adam Bede (1859) "'It's a pretty spot, whoever may own it," said the traveller.' Notice that the form appears here in the speech of a character, and not in the discourse of the narrator.

Lindley Murray from whom Squeers quotes inaccurately, explains the use of articles and the 'h' rule as follows:

In English, there are but two articles, a and the: a becomes an before a vowel, and before a silent h; as an acorn, an hour. But if the h be sounded, the a only is to be used; as a hand, a heart, a highway.¹¹⁹

Squeers is very obviously wrong in his use of the indefinite article in a acorn and a hour. Fowler's Modern English Usage (1st edition 1926, revised 1965) gives the rule as follows:

"A" is used before all consonants except silent h (a history, an hour); "an" was formerly usual before an unaccented syllable beginning with h and is still often seen and heard (an historian, an hotel, an hysterical scene.... But now that the h in such words is pronounced the distinction has become anomalous and will no doubt disappear in time. Meantime speakers who like to say "an" should not try to have it both ways by aspirating the h. "A" is now usual also before vowel letters that in pronunciation are preceded by a consonantal sound (a unit, a eulogy, a one).

Lindley Murray is very severe about the laxity of teachers and their pupils in applying the 'h' rule.

The inattention of writers and printers to this necessary distinction, has occasioned the frequent use of an before h, when it is to be pronounced; and this circumstance, more than any other, has probably contributed to that indistinct utterance, or total omission, of the sound signified as the letter, which very often occurs amongst readers and speakers. An horse, an husband, an heathen, and many similar associations, are frequently to be found in works of taste and merit. To remedy this evil, readers should be taught to omit, in all similar cases, the sound of the n, and to give the h its full pronunciation.¹²⁰

It is the "h rule" that Squeers is quoting inaccurately. Note that his example has nothing whatever to do with an understood subject governing another part of speech. Squeers

has failed to provide agreement between the article and noun in his examples. Squeers also "drops his h's" a stereotypical feature of uneducated speech. Dickens uses this for more word-play: "a and, a art, a ighway," for Squeers uses this to illustrate the rule "when the h is sounded", thus leading the reader to see the first two words as "and" and "art" (which require "an" as article) instead of "hand" and "hart" or "heart".

When Squeers concludes "And if it is, I've done it accidentally."; there is a pun on accidentally; this plays upon the normal meaning of "In an accidental manner; by accident, by chance, unintentionally, casually."[Oxford English Dictionary], and a grammatical usage of accident. This is defined as

The changes to which words are subject, in accordance with the relations in which they are used; the expression of the phenomena of gender, number, case, mood, tense etc.

[Oxford English Dictionary]

The Oxford English Dictionary describes this as obsolete replaced by accidence. Accident and accidence are cognate. The latter is defined as:

That part of Grammar which treats of the Accidents or inflections of words; a book of the rudiments of grammar. [There follows a citation from De Quincey's Style:] "With two or three exceptions... we have never seen the writer... who has not sometimes violated the accidence or the syntax of English grammar."

Dickens has introduced the discourse of Victorian prescriptive grammar into the novel and parodied it, by giving false and inappropriate examples and by punning. The passage signals the origin of its discourse as Squeers is

said to be "quoting at random from the grammar." However, the word play involving which form of indefinite article should go before words beginning with "h" and the learned pun on "accidentally" are less obvious and demand some investigation of the history of grammatical discourse. The "voice" behind them is Dickens', and not Squeers himself. It is noticeable that though Squeers says this aloud to Peg Sliderskew, it is not part of any message communicated to her, as she is deaf, and he is not shouting, it is "of course inaudible to Peg." [NN 750]

This is a grammar of carnival, with all its categories stood on their heads.¹²¹ By this carnivalisation, Dickens takes revenge upon the narrow prescriptivism of Lindley Murray and the way in which grammar was used to discipline pupils.

In Our Mutual Friend, Miss Peecher, jealous of Bradley Headstone's interest in Lizzie Hexam interrogates her pupil, Mary Anne:

'Well, Mary Anne?'
'They say she's very handsome,'
'Oh, Mary Anne, Mary Anne!' returned Miss Peecher, slightly colouring and shaking her head, a little out of humour; how often have I told you not to use that vague expression, not to speak in that general way? When you say they say, what do you mean? Part of speech They?'
Mary Anne hooked her right arm behind her in her left hand, as being under examination, and replied:
'Personal pronoun.'
'Person, They?'
'Third person.'
'Number, They?'
'Plural number.'
'Then how many do you mean, Mary Anne, Two? Or more?'
'I beg pardon, ma'am,' said Mary Anne, disconcerted now she came to think of it; 'but I don't know that I mean more than her brother himself.'....
'I felt convinced of it,' returned Miss Peecher, smiling again. 'Now pray, Mary Anne, be careful

another time. He says is very different from they say, remember. Difference between he says and they say? Give it to me.'

Mary Anne immediately hooked her right arm behind her in her left hand - an attitude absolutely necessary to the situation - and replied: 'One is indicative mood, present tense, third person singular, verb active to say. Other is indicative mood, present tense, third person plural, verb active to say.'

'Why verb active, Mary Anne?'

'Because it takes a pronoun after it in the objective case, Miss Peecher.'

'Very good indeed,' remarked Miss Peecher, with encouragement 'in fact, could not be better. Don't forget to apply it, another time, Mary Anne.'

[OMF 220-221]

Miss Peecher's questions, motivated by jealousy of Lizzie Hexam, in effect, punish the messenger for her message. The grammars used in Victorian schools were pre-eminently grammars of written usage, indeed it is only comparatively recently that the grammar of speech has begun to be investigated and formalised. Mary Anne's 'They say' was a colloquial usage, an example of what Lindley Murray terms a 'low expression.' The correct form was held to be the written form of language, the contractions and elisions of speech were held to debase or contaminate this pure form. Lindley Murray warns of the need for propriety in language, and singles out relative pronouns as deserving particular care.

Propriety of language is the selection of such words as the best usage has appropriated to those ideas, which we intend to express by them; in opposition to low expressions, and to words and phrases which would be less significant of the ideas that we mean to convey.¹²² With regard to relatives, it may be further observed, that obscurity often arises from the too frequent repetition of them, particularly of the pronouns who and they, and them and theirs, when we have occasion to refer to different persons....¹²³

Lindley Murray's English Exercises (1824) published as a companion to his grammar for the instruction of children, contain many examples of the parsing exercise that Mary Anne is subjected to.¹²⁴ The grammar and the method of applying it to sentences was to be learned by rote. A single example may give the flavour of the method:

'Vice degrades us.' Vice is a common substantive, of the neuter gender, the third person, in the singular number, and the nominative case. Degrades is a regular verb active, indicative mood, present tense, third person singular, agreeing with its nominative "vice," according to Rule 1. which says; (here repeat the rule.) Us is a personal pronoun, first person plural, in the objective case, and governed by the active verb "degrades," agreeably to Rule X1. which says, &C.¹²⁵

Mary Anne, then, is forced to parse her colloquial expression in order that she recognise its vagueness and deviation from the written formal standard.¹²⁶ The parsing examination is a disciplinary apparatus for the control of discourse.¹²⁷

In this chapter, I have attempted to apply various theories of Bakhtin and Derrida to readings of Dickens. According to Bakhtin, language consists of a state of 'heteroglossia', diverse voices which are subject to two forces. One tendency is towards unity and homogeneity, the other tendency is towards diversity and change. Such movement is not purely linguistic, since they depend on social intervention, for example the writing of prescriptive grammars expresses a tendency for homogeneity, while the constant development and obsolescence of slang exemplifies the tendency towards diversity and change. Following Bakhtin, I have resisted attempting to catalogue Dickens' style. It is not fruitful to separate the language of individual characters, without

relating these to extra-literary discourses. Literary language has been treated as a domain of the socio-historical continuum, rather than as a reflection of speech or writing. Dickens' Cockney is not an accurate representation of real speech traits of the inner London working classes, but a discourse which serves to amuse, perplex, and foreground social and linguistic difference. In the case of the 'W' and 'V' transposition during the court room scene of The Pickwick Papers, I have sought to show that there is a complex mediation between text, sound and graphics. This scene deals with the power and knowledge within social discourse, rather than being merely amusing. Speech in the novel is always inferred, it is never present. Dickens exploits the ways in which speech and writing are interrelated, to produce both humour and social comment. Consequently, the language of Dickens needs to be 'looked at and listened to' in Samuel Beckett's phrase.¹²⁸ As in the description of the black dance-caller, 'listened to' means experimenting with the ways in which the graphic effects of the text might be read aloud. Dickens is always very much aware of the physical material of both spoken and language. The sheer amount of word-play and misunderstanding serves to emphasise the material qualities of language, stressing its capacity to deceive, trap and wound. Dickens incorporates misunderstanding into the text itself, rather than simply describe it. As Lady Dedlock has to struggle with the alien discourse of Jo, the crossing sweeper, so the reader must grapple with a dense language which is not simply glossed or explained. Dickens clearly prided himself on the mastery of different varieties of English. There are many examples of specialised language .

being represented and parodied within the novels. For example, the 'Flash' language used by the Artful Dodger in Oliver Twist, the Game Chicken's boxing jargon and many instances of legal discourse. In each case, Dickens incorporates the specialised register into his text, and by parody and humour exposes the ideologies of the group or groups which use it. Language is seen as dividing individual and groups as well as bringing them together. Finally, the incorporation and parody of prescriptive grammar is examined. Dickens parodies and ruins the categories of grammar in his appropriation of Lindley Murray in Nicholas Nickleby. Elsewhere he shows how grammar was used to discipline persons through the control of their language. Dickens' own writing, often criticised as 'ungrammatical' may be seen as subverting by transgression and parody, the rules of standard written English. However, because knowledge of any norm is required in order to recognise its transgression, such deviations have an ambivalent status, for they re-state the orthodoxy while at the same time transgressing it. Hence Dickens' subversions of grammar are only understandable in a context which recognises the norms of a standard written language.

Chapter 4

Names and Name-Calling in Dickens

Felix Guattari, whose work I drew upon in describing 'Negative Linguistics' in Chapter Two, indicated 'the coercive and integrative functions of language' ignored by orthodox linguistics. He urged the study of 'problems arising from connotation, context, the implicit', those language transactions that fall outside abstract relations of communication between individuals.¹ The area I wish to focus on in this chapter is that of proper names, which interconnects the personal with the public. At first glance, nothing could be more individual than a name, and few things more individualistic about Dickens' style than what Stanley Gerson has termed the 'semi-ludicrous' names of many Dickensian characters.² Yet naming also exemplifies what Guattari calls 'the coercive and integrative functions of language', for it is a public and social nomination. Naming connects the individual social subject (the person) with the system of culture and language. Steven Connor in Charles Dickens (1985) has described this in Lacanian terms, and very briefly sketched its applicability to Dickens.³ However, while his account is suggestive, he condenses it to almost a reading off of code words from the Lacan lexicon: '...names are a very good example of the Imaginary and Symbolic attitudes to language acting together.'⁴ At the same time

studies of Dickensian names are being produced, which while often rich in incidental detail, are lacking in any theoretical orientation which could explain the material they describe other than as a theme of Dickens' style.⁵ Before turning to Dickens' use of names, I shall therefore briefly describe the social function of names within the theoretical framework I have adopted. Word-play and puns are, I suggest, indicative of heteroglossia and in Dickens this is subversively brought into naming. While I regard such word-play as characteristic of heteroglossia, Bakhtin himself has little to say on the subject, even in his study of Rabelais. I have initially drawn upon post-structuralist thinking on word-play with proper names, especially in relation to psychoanalysis, though my overall conclusions will tend to favour Bakhtin's emphasis on the socio-historical context of meaning.

Proper names, the names of individual persons, places or things, have fundamental functions in any human society. Personal names, themselves a sub-set of Proper Names, are basic to the socialisation process whereby a human infant is named, is identified as a person, and learns to recognise itself (and is recognised by others) as an individual human subject with a place in the family unit. In the post Judaeo-Christian culture of Europe, it is normal for a child to bear its father's name. Naming has a basic function in the continuance of patriarchy. Upon marriage a woman is expected to adopt the surname of her husband, that name in turn, will have been the name of his father, thus the surname of the father is common to all members of the family unit. The name

of the father is continued down the patriarchal line, sons bear the names of their father, while daughters who marry take on the name of their husband. This patriarchal naming system is at once so obvious and basic, that comparatively little has been said about it.⁶ It facilitates the inheritance of land and property, confirms origin, and unifies family identity. Besides the surname, a newly born infant will be given by its parents one or more forenames, which until recently it was usual to term 'Christian' names. In the Church of England, it was normal for a child to be baptised in public, according to the order of baptism prescribed by The Book of Common Prayer. The child is named, dipped in holy water and baptised 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' The place of the child within society is assured by its entry into a pre-existing naming system. Both it and other people will know who it is, who its kin are and its place in the social order. The concept of 'the Name of the Father' developed by Lacan from Freud aims at expressing the forbidding nature of the Father and his role in ensuring the patriarchal order. The French phrase nom-du-pere is ambiguous when spoken aloud, it refers to 'the name of the father' and 'the no of the father.' Freud, according to Lacan, was led:

to link the appearance of the signifier of the Father, as author of the Law, with death, even to the murder of the Father- thus showing that if this murder is the fruitful moment of debt through which the subject binds himself for life to the Law, the symbolic Father, in so far as he signifies this law, the dead father.⁷

Lacan gnomically condenses allusions to God as the Father of all things and as the source of Jewish Law, with the

patriarchal structure of Freud's Oedipus complex.⁸ Human infants take their place at birth within a pre-existing language system which expresses and constructs a pre-existing social system. Naming is thus fundamental in the acquisition of human identity.

There is a considerable philosophical literature on the logical status of proper names from Aristotle to the modern logic of Russell and Frege. John Lyons synthesises the attitude to proper names in western philosophy of language as follows:

Proper names ... are to be regarded as the most 'substantival' - the most truly 'nominal' - of the expressions in a language (hence the traditional term 'substantive' for 'noun'). They are particular (or 'singular') terms, denoting some definite, individual substance.⁹

Thus, in a classic paper by Bertrand Russell, the proper name 'Walter Scott' denotes the author of Waverley. Proper names, it is argued, have a one-to-one correspondence between word and object, moreover allegedly they have reference as opposed to meaning. Hence it is senseless to ask what is the meaning of the expression Walter Scott, one can only ask to whom does the expression Walter Scott refer. Proper names then have a purely denotive function, they refer to particular individuals¹⁰. Notice also that they are not translated into other languages, the original form of the name remains the same- Jean-Jacques Lecercle is not translated into English as John Jack Circle.

Julia Kristeva draws upon the philosophy of language in her discussion of the proper name in her essay 'The True/Real'¹¹

However, she draws exactly the opposite conclusions to the logicians; for her, 'the fragility of the proper name when it comes to fixing a signified identity is shown first of all in the multiplication of proper names.'¹² She argues that Freud's Moses and Monotheism is a response to the link posited by the logicians between name and identity:

It shows that any fabulation around a name (as is the case with the great religions) is articulated around a name whose 'historical truth' is undecideable, revealing only the fact that the feature peculiar to every 'proper name' is that it does not have an 'historical truth' ¹³

Her interpretation of the perpetuation of the name of the father is in terms of the Oedipus Complex. The continuity of name conceals the fact that the child exists as a separate person and is not an adjunct of the father. Kristeva also makes the point that by using the proper name as an origin for a narrative, a literary text endows it with plausibility. This is very suggestive for the consideration of Bildungsroman, and as I shall argue, the name of Pip is the seed or origin for the narrative of Great Expectations developed from it. The implication of Kristeva's work is that identity can be destroyed or fragmented by the lack of a proper name. She draws upon Freud's case history of 'The Rat Man' one Daniel Paul Schreber, who was persecuted by 'voices', among these 'Bernard Haase' - 'bad boy and murderer'; R., 'traveller and rake; and Julius Emile Haase, a wise and respectable old man.' Kristeva comments that the numerous Rs of these characters are inscribed in the name 'Schreber' while their surname is identical to that of Schreber's mother's maiden name - Pauline Haase. This 'enunciative archeology of the proper name as a strategy of

discourse' she argues discloses the space of the semiotic, which is characterised by drives of energy, the rhythms and gestures which lie at the interface between language and the body.¹⁴ Kristeva's excavation of the proper name as a means of generating discourse is strikingly similar in many ways to Derrida's.

The strategy of overturning the 'natural' connection between word and thing, name and referent is evident from the earliest of Derrida's writings. The 'proper' name is shown to be improper, and speculation on the proper name leads to a questioning of the speech act of a signature, an autograph, the possession of the meaning of writing, the authority of an author, the act of writing one's own proper name as a signature, the act of signing. Thus, via a play on words, to questioning Saussure's theory of the sign. As Gregory Ulmer notes in his Applied Grammatology (1985), for Derrida sign is a verb not a noun.¹⁵ This ploy is found in Of Grammatology, 'Limited Inc abc'¹⁶ and the much anthologised 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences'.¹⁷ In more recent texts, such as Glas (1974) and Signéponge (1984)¹⁸, Derrida developed the strategy of revealing the dissemination of an author's proper name through the images of the text. Derrida's essay on the poet Francis Ponge is not about the man, nor ostensibly about his poetry, but about the name 'Francis Ponge'. A series of plays on words with 'sign' and 'Ponge' produce among several others: éponge 'sponge', éponger 'to clean with a sponge' and ponce 'pumice'. These commonplace articles, Derrida then discovers as images in Ponge's poems. The name of the author is a

rebus inscribed within the text. (A rebus is the enigmatic representation of a word or name, by pictures suggesting its syllables also a heraldic device suggesting the name of the bearer.) Derrida has used the proper name of the author as a rhetorical device, inventio for the production of a reading. Moreover he alleges that the texts written by Ponge are an elaboration of his proper name. However, by moving from the proper name to the common name (from 'Ponge' to 'sponge' for example), Derrida undermines the propriety of the Proper name revealing the commonplace chance of ordinary things, such as sponge, pumice etcetera as images and the arbitrary relation between words and things. There is nothing special about 'Ponge', it becomes a 'signsponge' which cleans by absorbing dirt. Sponge becomes an analogue of writing and metaphor itself. Writing becomes not an appropriation of the world, but a means of dispersing the proper name. Such an unusual reading strategy is very far from the way in which texts are usually interpreted and thus far Derrida has had few followers who have attempted such styles of reading.¹⁹ My comments on Signéponge are the merest outline of the complex turns of Derrida's argument.²⁰ It is not my purpose to examine the philosophical implications of Derrida's argument here. Derrida's use of word-play on proper names as inventio, a rhetorical opening for narrative, is however pertinent to the way Dickens constructed narratives around names. Derrida's interest in the semantic possibilities of proper names, opened up by word-play and speculative etymology is also highly appropriate to the consideration of Dickens. Derrida uses 'etymology as a mode of thought' rather than as a way of revealing the truth. Puns and

etymology, both of which may be considered as aspects of the same phenomena, become a rhetorical demonstration that relations exist between what are supposed to be separate.

In The Consciousness of Joyce, Richard Ellmann suggests that 'Punning offers... countersense, through which disparates are joined and concordants differentiated.' The joining of disparates and the differentiation of concordants would accurately define the textual practice of Derrida, who has himself written on Joyce.²¹ Punning may be seen in terms of Bakhtin's carnival, it offers the pleasures of disrupting sense and the pleasure of surface linguistic features like rhyme, consonance or assonance. Geoffrey Hartman is uncharacteristically reserved when dealing with puns.

There is no such thing as a good pun. Puns are the only thing beyond good and evil. Perhaps we could talk, like Horace, of curious felicities or splendid vices of style - I don't know.²²

The truth is that puns can be good, bad or indifferent, shockingly obvious or byzantine in erudition. Their use in advertising and their constant presence in the language of the streets to ridicule or amuse surely deserves scholarly attention.

'What's the water in French, sir?'
'L'Eau,' replied Nicholas
'Ah!' said Mr. Lillyvick, shaking his head
mournfully, 'I thought as much. Lo, eh? I don't
think anything of that language- nothing at all.'
[NN 204]

Mr Lillyvick has argued that french is a dismal language, because he heard French prisoners of war talking in a sad manner in their native tongue. The faulty logic, combined with the groaning pun, masks something interesting. Dickens

has managed to connect L'Eau with low without writing the English word, instead he uses the graphic representation of the sound lo and the reader completes the sense. Such accidental occurrences as the similarity of sound between L'Eau and low force attention to the substance of language itself. The play is between writing, sound and meaning. The mechanism of rhyme has a similar function in bringing together elements which are semantically different. As of course does metaphor. This pun is admittedly rather feeble, but others based on the same mechanism are more involved and sometimes brilliantly adroit. Many of these involve proper names and several layers of polysemy.

Mrs Squeers hates 'that Knuckleboy' [NN 98]. Her slip of the tongue in speaking of Nickleby suggests her own attitude to her charges; knuckle-boy, to strike the boys with her knuckles. The sound of Nickleby and Knuckleboy are similar, differences are produced by vowel gradation similar to the process of ablaut responsible for the paradigm sing, sang, sung and many other examples in Indo-European languages. Knuckleboy is an example of classic Freudian parapraxes 'versprechen'²³ Freud recognised that creative writers discovered this process, before he classified it and saw it in relation to dreams and sexuality, his examples come from many literary sources, including Shakespeare.²⁴ Mrs Squeers is unconsciously expressing her attitude of Nicholas and the rest of the pupils in her slip of the tongue. The name Squeers would appear to be a compound of Squints and queer. Though Stanley Gerson suggests that it is a blend of queer and squeeze, or even a dialect form of 'queer', squeer.²⁵ As

in the case of James Joyce, it is not possible to be more than speculative about the components of Dickens' portmanteau words, for these writers should be seen as providing the material for the reader to construct meaning, rather than to merely decode a pre-existing meaning. Though Dickens' use of names grew out of his own reading experience in Fielding and Smollett and the use of allegory in Bunyan, his polysemous names develop far beyond the likes of Lady Booby or Mr Badman. Exploration of Dickens' word-play with names requires some speculation, a willingness to play with the elements of language, and some historical knowledge of non-standard vocabulary. Dickens like Joyce, seems to create an implied reader of similar linguistic taste to himself.

As a response to Derrida, Geoffrey Hartman connects naming with the archaic categories of curse and blessing, which he uses to examine the properties of language to 'wound' or 'heal'.

To enter language means to risk being named, or recognised by name, to struggle against false names or identities, to live in the knowledge that reconnaissance and mépris(e) are intertwined, and that self and other are terms that glide eccentrically about an always im-proper ('metaphoric') naming of things or persons. There is no ultimate recognition scene.²⁶

Hartman's mélange of Freud, Lacan, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Derrida is deeply suggestive when considering the opening of Great Expectations. The semantics; reconnaissance 'recognition' or 'gratitude'; mépris 'contempt', 'scorn'; méprise 'mistake', 'error', 'misunderstanding' resound in the thematics of that novel, and for that matter throughout Dickens' entire work. In Lacan, meconnaissance 'failure to

recognise', 'misconstruction' is central to the formation of the ego, being inextricably bound up with knowledge (connaissance^s). Meconnaissance for Lacan is thus necessary and unavoidable. As I will show, this painful lesson can be seen to be taught in Great Expectations. Lacan taught French intellectuals to read Freud and to pay attention to the text. In order to read Lacan productively, it is necessary to become acquainted with the works of Freud, for otherwise one becomes lost in a series of linguistic displacements. Before taking a linguistic turn, I shall return to Freud, and specifically to his concept of the 'family romance' as a ground for later textual readings.

The Freudian concept of 'family romance' is strikingly apposite to the Victorian novel and especially to the work of Dickens.²⁷ This is not unexpected, for Freud is seeking to understand the nature of social myths and the German title Der Familienroman der Neurotiker brings out the affinity of the concept with fiction. Roman means 'novel' or 'work of fiction' besides 'romance'.²⁸ Rather than use psychoanalytic concepts as tools for the interpretation of fiction, several scholars, among them Peter Brooks and Alexander Walsh are exploring the relation between psychoanalysis and literature, through their common approaches to narrative.²⁹ The 'family romance' describes the common fantasy that children have that their parents are not really their parents, imagining instead, that they are adopted, or a step-child, the 'real' parent being someone of high social status. Changeling^{e/} children of kings in folk-tales are an obvious literary example. According to Freud, the function of this fantasy is

the liberation of an individual from the authority of his parents. In using the masculine pronoun, I follow Freud deliberately, for in psychoanalysis the child is always a little man, the place of the Oedipus Complex in female sexuality remained for Freud something unknown, characteristically of the family romance he wrote 'In this respect the imagination of girls is apt to show itself much weaker.'³⁰ I am using the patriarchal discourse of psychoanalysis to explore Dickens' sublimated fantasies of an extremely patriarchal society. In Derridian terms, the implication, the 'folding' between Dickens and Freud is of significance. We know that Freud valued David Copperfield highly.³¹ It is not then, a matter of regarding psychoanalytic concepts as a priori true, but of regarding psychoanalysis and the novel as mutually relative means of describing narrative.

According to Freud, a painful process of liberation is essential for normal development in an adult. For the small child, the parents are the only source of authority and belief. At this stage the infant desires to be like his parents, but as he develops, he discovers the place of his parents within society. By comparison between his parents and other adults, he begins to doubt the 'incomparable and unique quality' with which he had invested them. Occurrences in the child's life which make him dissatisfied provide grounds for criticism of the parents, the knowledge that other parents are in some ways preferable to them is used to support this.

There are only too many occasions on which a child is slighted, or at least feels he has been

slighted, on which he feels he is not receiving the whole of his parents' love, and, most of all, on which he feels regrets at having to share it with brothers and sisters. His sense that his own affection is not being fully reciprocated then finds a vent in the idea.... of being a step-child or an adopted child.³²

The child's struggles to get free from the parents of whom he has now a low opinion may result in a fantasy in which they are replaced by others, usually of higher social standing. Revenge and retaliation are central to such fantasy. Freud softens this picture of the 'depravity of the childish heart' by arguing that the faithlessness and ingratitude towards the parents are only apparent. The whole effort of replacing the real father by a superior is only an expression of the child's longing for the happy vanished days when the father seemed the noblest and strongest of men, and the mother the dearest and loveliest of women. The child's overvaluation of his parents survives in the dreams of normal adults.³³

As is usual with Freud, the normal shades imperceptibly into the pathological. Neurosis is the natural human condition in Freud's later work, this paper dates probably from 1908 and the term Familienroman was used in a letter to Fleiss of 1898.³⁴

There is a class of neurotics, wrote Freud, who fail to achieve liberation by means of the family romance. Certainly Dickens appears to fall into that class, for instead of leaving the fantasy of the family romance behind, as most adults do, he was instead compelled to repeat the fantasy interminably through the sublimation of his novels. Critics are fond of praising Dickens' childlike imagination, his startling ability to humanise the inanimate and make the

human inanimate, but less willing to recognise that this is accompanied by some childish qualities. According to Freud, the family romance of the normal adult male child manifest considerably more hostility towards the father, than the mother, the child 'has a far more intense desire to get free from him than her.'³⁵

Often, the child will accept the mother as his real mother, but imagines a substitute father. As many critics have shown Dickens' work, however is characterised by hostility towards the mother figure.³⁶ The father figure, Mr Micawber among others, is forgiven, the substitute mother has a less happy fate, Miss Havisham dies after being burned, Mrs Joe lingers after being clubbed down by Orlick, Pip's 'bad' double and rival, with a weapon Pip unwittingly provided.

The concept of the 'family romance' and the various speculations about the functioning of proper names, I have discussed may be applied to Great Expectations. Pip, in common with many other Dickensian heroes is an orphan. In sublimating the family romance, Dickens has eliminated both mother and father and rival brothers who compete for the affection of the parents. Pip stands before their graves.

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

[GE 1]

In the first words of the novel, Pip names himself by the elision of his proper name Philip Pirrip, which is only mentioned once again in Great Expectations, when Pip returns with Joe and Biddy's son to the graveyard at the end of the

novel. Pip calls himself Pip, and is known by others by that name. His rival and enemy, Orlick is also self-named:

He pretended that his christian name was Dolge - a clear impossibility - but he was a fellow of that obstinate disposition that I believe him to have been the prey of no delusion in this particular, but wilfully to have imposed that name upon the village as an affront to its understanding.

[GE 105]

Pip alleges that Orlick imposed the name Dolge upon the village, while knowing all the time that it was not his proper name. Dolge is Italianate, fitting Orlick's dark, passionate and moody disposition. It is an exotic and unusual name, and by conferring it upon himself Orlick seems to be giving himself the status, which in reality as a blacksmith's journeyman, he lacks. By contrast, Pip's own self-imposed name is ordinary and homely. The name Pip is a palindrome, as is Pirrip and Philip Pirrip is nearly one. The sound /filip/ /pirip/ shows what substitutions have been made. It appears that Dickens wanted to repeat the sounds of Pip's name as closely as it was possible to do so, in English. ('Nicholas Nickleby' exhibits the same strategy.) 'Philip Phillips' would have spoiled the palindrome, which we must conceptualise both in auditory and visual terms. As Peter Brooks has usefully suggested the word Pip means 'a seed'- the origin of the growth which we will follow in the novel.³⁷ The sound /pip/ is a minimal repetition of consonant plus vowel plus repeated consonant. The name is physically small, like a pip, and like the small child himself. Pirrip has 'r' substituted for 'p' which spoils the mirror structure 'pip-pip'- at its heart it contains a rip a forceable tear or wound. Pip bears a wound, for his dead

parents cannot return his love, and he seems condemned to a life of guilt. By law, Pip bears the name of his father, but he transgresses 'the authority of the tombstone' [GE 1], the writing of his dead father's name, by his act of self-nomination. No-one ever calls him by his 'proper name' Mr Philip Pirrip, not even the lawyer Jaggers. Self-naming as Geoffrey Hartman points out indicates a lost origin. (Recall what Freud said about this uncertainty in 'Family Romance'.)

Naming does have a spectral dimension if we seek to perpetuate someone by calling a child after him.

(It makes the child a revenant, Freud said).³⁸

A revenant is one returned from the dead, or from exile. Named after his father, Pip is intended to be a revenant, but he refuses the christian and the surname of his father by his act of self-nomination. David Copperfield bore the name of the father, but Pip will not. In both novels the return of the father symbolised by being a revenant is denied. David Copperfield's 'first childish associations' are of his father's 'white grave-stone in the churchyard', while the house doors are 'almost cruelly, it seemed to me sometimes-bolted and locked against it'. [DC 2] The structure of Great Expectations is that of repetition with difference. Pip has his own revenant, for the child of Biddy and Joe is named 'Pip' after him.³⁹

There, smoking his pipe in the old place by the kitchen firelight, as hale and as strong as ever, though a little grey, sat Joe; and there, fenced into the corner with Joe's leg, and sitting on my own little stool looking at the fire, was -- I again!

'We giv' him the name of Pip for your sake, dear chap, said Joe, delighted when I took another stool by the child's side (but I did not rumple his hair), 'and we hoped he might grow a little bit like you, and we think he do.'

I thought so too, and I took him out for a walk next morning, and we talked immensely, understanding one another to perfection. And I took him down to the churchyard, and sat him on a certain tombstone there, and he showed me from that elevation which stone was sacred to the memory of Philip Pirrip, late of this Parish, and Also Georgiana, Wife of the Above.

[GE 457]

There is a return to the churchyard where Pip had his life turned upside down, both literally and metaphorically by Magwitch before being sat upon a high tombstone. But this Pip has a loving father and mother, so by the action of the novel in returning the end to the beginning, the crossed are uncrossed and the crooked made straight. Loose threads of the text are woven back into the beginning, so that the closure here is almost circular. Jeremy Tambling⁴⁰ reads the meeting with little Pip as an oppressive cycle of repetition, arguing that Pip, by suggesting to Biddy, that she should 'give Pip to him, one of these days, or lend him at all events' [GE 457] intends to restart the whole cycle of oppression. Tambling comments:

Pip is offering to play Magwitch to Biddy's child. He has learned nothing: is indeed a recidivist, unaware of how much he has been made himself a subject of other people's power and knowledge.⁴¹

This neglects the fact that Pip has just, in a sense, played Magwitch to Biddy's child, by taking him up to the churchyard and repeating the initial scene. The differences between Pip and Biddy's child are crucial, it is only their name which joins them. The churchyard visit with little Pip may be read as a final unbinding, by the working- out of the initial trauma through repetition. In the cancelled conclusion, Pip meets Estella as he walks with little Pip. She shakes Pip's

hand and tells him to lift up the child so that she can kiss it '(She supposed the child, I think, to be my child.)' [GE 460] This kiss is a repetition that may be read as the working-out of the kiss Estella gave Pip after the fight with Herbert Pocket.[GE 86]

Little Pip is now legitimately the child of Joe (the ideal father) and Biddy (the ideal composite of wife, mother, and sister). Little Pip has a secure origin. Contrast this with the questions posed by the stranger with the file who confronts Joe at 'The Jolly Bargemen'.

'What is it you call him?'
'Pip,' said Joe
'Christened Pip?'
'No, not christened Pip.'
'Surname Pip.'
'No,' said Joe; 'it's a kind of family name what he gave himself when a infant, and is called by.'
'Son of yours?'
'Well,' said Joe, meditatively ... 'well-no. No, he ain't.'
'Nevvy?' said the strange man.
'Well,' said Joe, with the same appearance of profound cogitation, 'he is not -no, not to deceive you, he is not- my nevvv.'
'What the Blue Blazes is he?' asked the stranger.

[GE 71]

As a poor substitute for the deceased Georgiana, Pip had to suffer his sister, always referred to as 'Mrs Joe' with her 'square impregnable bib in front, that was stuck full of pins and needles' [GE 6] instead of maternal breasts. Denied knowledge of his parents, Pip fantasises about their appearance by tracing the incised names on their gravestone.

The shape of the letters on my father's (tombstone), gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, 'Also Georgiana Wife of the Above,' I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly.

There could be few more tragic illustrations of the absence of physical presence in writing and the consequent need to fabricate an origin. This is the unheimlich aspect of Derrida, the Wandering Jew.⁴² Freud in Civilisation and its Discontents points the bitter message:

Writing was in its origin the voice of an absent person; and the dwelling house was a substitute for the mother's womb, the first lodging, for which in all likelihood man still longs, and in which he was safe and felt at ease.⁴³

In reading Great Expectations there is an almost irresistible urge for the (male) reader to identify with Pip. The first three paragraphs of the novel are in the first person, then with '"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice...' the reader is slipped into 'the position of being listeners, overhearers, watchers, of speech and events.' in Graham Martin's words. Martin then summarises the effect:

Our consciousness that we are being told a story has, for the time being, lapsed into the events of the story itself. We participate in these events from Pip's point of view, in relation to his feelings. The 'fearful man' is presented to us externally, a mysterious and terrible irruption into Pip's life, otherwise unexplained. And this, too, contributed to the effect of 'reality': how else, we say, would, a child respond to such an event? ⁴⁴

But, since 'we participate in these events from Pip's point of view' it is not altogether certain that the reader is mere listener, overhearer, or watcher. Part of the shock of the terrible voice occurs because it appears to address the reader directly. The imperative 'Hold your noise' functions as interpellation, a process in which the subject recognises

that 'it really is he' that is being addressed.⁴⁵ An intricate linguistic explanation of the functions of pronouns in providing an empty space which is filled by the speaker in discourse can be found in Emile Benveniste's Problemes de Linguistique Generale (1966)).⁴⁶ 'I' and 'you' situate discourse and do not have material reference, they cannot be defined except in terms of locution, they are what Jakobson (after Jespersen) calls 'shifters' in his classic paper.⁴⁷ I would argue therefore that the imperative 'Hold your noise' addresses the reader at the same time as Pip himself, thereby identifying the reader with Pip. Pip, having traced the names of his father and mother names his five dead brothers: Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias and Roger, all died while infants, each has a little stone lozenge of a grave stone. The brothers may be dead and buried, but their identities and existence are acknowledged by Pip. ('Tobias' may be a revenant of Tobias Smollett, a favourite novelist of Dickens' childhood.) In contrast Pip refers to his sister only by formal title of her husband's name, Mrs Joe Gargery. In fact throughout the entire novel we never learn her christian name.⁴⁸ This is a basic ideological mechanism for defeminising and indeed perhaps even dehumanising her. The Murdstones of David Copperfield are dealt with in the same fashion. After this reflection on his dead family, faced with a dismal landscape Pip begins to cry. Having commanded him to silence, the man threatens to cut his throat.

'O! Don't cut my throat, sir,' I pleaded in
terror. 'Pray don't do it, sir.'
'Tell us your name!' said the man. 'Quick!'
'Pip, sir.'
'Once more,' said the man, staring at me. 'Give
it mouth!'
'Pip, Pip, sir.'
'Show us where you live,' said the man. 'Pint
out the place!'

[GE 2]

Following the injunction to silence, and a threat to silence the boy for ever by cutting his throat, the man demands that Pip declare his identity. 'Give it mouth' physically locates the utterance of the name, as the injunction 'speak!' would not. The mouth and the throat are defined as the origin of the utterance as a physical process. Pip is forced to repeat this name to his unidentified interlocutor, then to indicate his home. Pip does not learn the name of the convict until he is twenty-three when Magwitch returns to London. However, in the intervening years, the man has been able to learn of him and provide the money to make him a gentleman, through Jaggers. All this was possible because Magwitch knew Pip's identity. By contrast, we do not learn of the convict's identity, even after he has reappeared in Pip's life. Pip does not ask his name till the next morning (and the reader has to wait for the next chapter following the convict's reappearance).

'I do not even know... what name to call you. I have given out that you are my uncle.'

'That's it, dear boy! Call me uncle.'

'You assumed some name, I suppose, on board ship?'

'Yes, dear boy. I took the name of Provis.'

'Do you mean to keep that name?'

'Why, yes, dear boy, it's as good as another - unless you'd like another.'

'What is your real name?' I asked him in a whisper.

'Magwitch,' he answered, in the same tone;

'chrisen'd Abel.'

'What were you brought up to be?'

'A warmint, dear boy.'

He answered quite seriously, and used the word as if it denoted some profession.

[GE 311-312]

By now Pip has some acquaintance with the world, he knows that the convict returning to England must have travelled under an alias. One name is 'as good as another' as far as Magwitch is concerned. The name Provis may be composed of the first elements of provisional, since it is a temporary substitute name. One should not credit Magwitch with this knowledge of course, any more than the significance of his christian name, Abel: the Biblical first victim, murdered by his brother Cain. The coupling of this christian name with Magwitch, whose elements indicate evil, 'Mag' and 'witch' makes a contradictory sign. Magwitch may be a criminal, thought by respectable people to be evil, yet he is presented in the novel as a victim of society. Magwitch's first conscious recollection is as painful as Pip's, but the implication that he was abandoned by his father is not made explicit.

'I first became aware of myself, down in Essex, a thieving turnips for my living. Summun had run away from me- a man- a tinker- and he'd took the fire with him, and left me wery cold.

'I know'd my name to be Magwitch, chrisen'd Abel. How did I know it? Much as I know'd the birds' names in the hedges to be chaffinch,

sparrer, thrush. I might have thought it was all lies together, only as the birds' names come out true, I supposed mine did.

[GE 328]

This is the origin of Magwitch's name. Later when Pip enlists the aid of Herbert Pocket, Provis is hidden under the name of Mr Campbell. [GE 359] Abel Magwitch, Provis and Mr. Campbell all denote the same person, however they signify very different social identities. The Scottish sounding Mr. Campbell is Pip's own invented alias for concealing Magwitch.

A hostile contemporary review of 'The Haunted Man' deplored its style which 'abounds with the Author's worst mannerisms', yet the reviewer was pleased with Dickens' properly Christian choice of names for at least three characters, for 'Generally, Mr Dickens, as if in revenge for his own queer name, does bestow still queerer ones upon his fictitious creations.'⁴⁹ In Dickens, language is frequently a battlefield and the possession and dispossession of names an area of class-warfare. Mr Dombey, despite his own queer name, suggestive of doom-be, or as Stanley Gerson suggests, tomb and dumb⁵⁰ clearly has 'no place for Glubbs of any kind', for when Mrs Toodle is engaged to look after little Paul, he insists that she should bear another name:

"While you are here, I must stipulate that you are always known as - say as Richards- an ordinary name, and convenient. Have you any objection to be known as Richards? You had better consult your husband."

[DS 18]

The name Toodle is singularly appropriate for a child's nurse, since according to the Oxford English Dictionary,

toodle as a verb has the sense 'to hum or sing in a low tone (as to a baby).'⁵¹ Mrs Toodle adopted her husband's name on marriage, recognising the husband's patriarchal authority. Mr Dombey evidently thinks it proper that she defer to him, before agreeing to change her name. There could hardly be any better illustration of what Lacan terms 'The Name of the Father' which is invested with the symbolic authority of the law. This will be an arrangement between men, the employer and the husband. Mrs Richards' husband says nothing in reply, he merely chuckles and grins, drawing his palm across his mouth, wetting it. Mrs Toodle replies 'that perhaps if she was to be called out of her name, it would be considered in the wages.' [DS 18] This is readily agreed. She sells her name along with her labour. Henceforth her employer and his servants call her Mrs Richards. When Dombey speaks to her husband, though, he calls him 'Mr what's-your-name.' [DS 18] The husband is not subordinated to Dombey, by being made to adopt another name as his wife is, however Dombey avoids calling him by the man's proper name. The process of re-naming Mrs Toodle is subjected to is widespread in his fiction, though the other characters are not paid for adopting a new name. Notice also that we never learn what Polly Toodle's maiden name was. The phrase to be called out of her name is interesting, since it identifies the mechanism which Louis Althusser terms interpellation⁵². Of course Mrs Toodle was free to refuse to recognise her new identity, but she subjected herself to it 'voluntarily' because she needs the money for her large family. Her adoption of her husband's queer name on marriage is just such another enforced choice.

Perhaps the strongest example of enforced naming is that of Tattycoram in Little Dorrit. Mr and Mrs Meagles have taken a girl from the Foundling Hospital, as a maid for their daughter. In the institution she was called:

'Harriet Beadle - an arbitrary, name of course. Now, Harriet we changed into Hatty, and then into Tatty, because as practical people, we thought even a playful name might be a new of thing to her, and might have a softening and affectionate kind of effect, don't you see.... The name of Beadle being out of the question, and the originator of the Institution for these poor foundlings having been a blessed creature of the name of Coram, we gave that name to Pet's little maid. At one time she was Tatty, and at she was Coram, until we got into a way of mixing the two names together, and now she is always Tattycoram.'

[LD 18-19]

The girl then, is what the Victorians classed as a 'foundling': 'A deserted infant whose parents are unknown, a child whom there is no one to claim.' [Oxford English Dictionary]. In the institution she is given arbitrarily a female name 'Harriet' and provided with the surname 'Beadle' after that parish official.⁵³ The Meagles re-name her Tattycoram after a series of linguistic substitutions, the effect of this is that she is marked out as different from the rest of English society, because she lacks Christian name and surname, being called simply 'Tattycoram'. Tatty derives from Old English and Norse words for rags, and means 'untidy, disreputable, "scruffy"', while tat itself has the entry 'poorly made or tasteless clothes. Hence, a shabby person, a slut.' Also 'rubbish, junk, worthless goods.' [Oxford English Dictionary Supplement]⁵⁴ Coram, besides being the surname of the Hospital's founder also has meaning, and is described by the Oxford English Dictionary as ' A Latin preposition meaning 'before, in the presence of', occurring in English in

various legal... phrases. coram iudice 'before a judge', coram paribus 'before one's peers' and coram populo before the people, 'in public'. Hence the phrase to bring under coram, call to or in coram: to call to account, bring to book; so to have under coram, i.e. under discipline or correction. A citation from Cotgrave is provided 'to discipline, schoole, correct, bring vnder coram.' [Oxford English Dictionary] Lewis and Short's A Latin Dictionary define coram as 'in the presence of, before the eyes of, in the face of, before.' A rough gloss of tattycoram then might be 'tatty before (the public)' So much for Mr Meagles' 'playful name'! The narrative of Little Dorrit never draws attention to the possible meanings of Tattycoram, instead we are given an explanation of how the Meagles arrived at the name, by substituting 'Tatty' for 'Hatty'etcetera. However since we know that Dickens knew Latin and especially Law-Latin, the meaning of coram becomes significant. This is not to claim of course that Dickens intended to signify the meanings I have extrapolated. However, it is clear, I think, that readers are correct to assume that Dickens' 'queer names' have meaning, even if the character who invents the name and the character who bears it remain unconscious of its possible significance. Tattycoram does not speculate about the meaning of her name, she certainly does realise what has been done to her when she breaks with the family, for among her reproaches, naming is central.

There was Mrs. Ticket, only yesterday, when her little grandchild was with her, had been amused by the child's trying to call her (Tattycoram) by the wretched name we gave her; and had laughed at the name. Why, who didn't; and who were we that we should have a right to name her like a dog or a cat? But, she didn't care. She would take no more

benefits from us; she would fling us her name back again, and she would go.

[LD 323]

So Meagles reports the scene, the complaint is not about the meaning of the name but about bearing a single name like a household pet, and moreover a name which (presumably because of its oddity) provokes laughter. After this the girl goes to live with one of Dickens' most interesting female characters, Miss Wade. Her life-story entitled 'The History of a Self-Tormentor' forms an entire chapter, it is an embittered self-confession. [LD 663] Miss Wade's actions and words lead Kate Flint among others to conclude that she is a lesbian and that her relations with Tattycoram^{are} based on sexual power.⁵⁵ Miss Wade shares Tattycoram's lack of knowledge about her birth 'What your broken plaything is as to birth, I am. She has no name, I have no name. Her wrong is my wrong.' [LD 330] Name here is equivalent to reputation. Virginia Blain cogently argues that female illegitimates bore greater stigma than males, since children born in sin were supposed to inherit their parents' weaknesses, immoral mothers supposedly breeding immoral daughters. Esther Summerson's real name Esther Hawdon (whore; hoydon) according to Blain indicates what would have been her fate had she been abandoned by Miss Rachael.⁵⁶ Miss Wade sarcastically points out the advantages to Tattycoram of her return to the Meagles' household.

You can have your droll name again, playfully pointing you out and setting you apart, as it is right that you should be pointed out and set apart. (Your birth, you know; you must not forget your birth.)

[LD 328]

Despite having had the benefit of Miss Wade's acute feminist analysis of life with the Meagles, Tattycoram does finally return to them and begs for the restoration of her old name.

'Dear Master, dear Mistress, take me back again, and give me back the dear old name!'. . . . Father and Mother Meagles never deserved their names better, than when they took the headstrong foundling-girl into their protection again.

[LD 811]

Dickens repeats the name Tattycoram, eight times in the next two pages, confirming the girl's acceptance of the order of things. However, despite his typically conservative conclusions to the narrative, Dickens has exposed the ideology of names in a patriarchal class society. This is revealed starkly as the will to power, providing a brutal political dimension to Geoffrey Hartman's anodyne statement: 'Literature is at once onomatopoeic (name-making) and onomatoclastic (name-breaking).' ⁵⁷ Tattycoram submits to the Law of the Father, renouncing the transgressive possibilities offered by Miss Wade [LD 811]. But if Dickens affirms Meagles' statement:

'Tattycoram... I'll call you by that name still, my good girl, conscious that I meant nothing but kindness when I gave it to you, and conscious that you know it....'

[LD 328]

He has also brought to the reader working within negative linguistics, the hypocrisy and false-consciousness that this entails. Miss Wade remains like Miss Havisham and Daniel Quilp a figure of fascinating power, a source of subversion to Dickens' declared domestic values.⁵⁸

The figure of the orphan or foundling articulates an important theme in Dickens' work. Oliver Twist, like Harriet Beadle, who becomes Tattycoram, was named by a public official. In Harriet's case the official named her after the title of his post, in Oliver's the Beadle, Mr Bumble uses an arbitrary process.

'The child that was half-baptised Oliver Twist, is nine years old to-day.... And notwithstanding an offered reward of ten pound, which was afterwards increased to twenty pound. Notwithstanding the most superlative, and I may say, supernat'ral exertions on the part of this parish... we have never been able to discover who is his father, or what was his mother's settlement, name or condition.'

Mrs. Mann raised her hands in astonishment; but added, after a moment's reflection, 'How comes he to have any name at all, then?'

The beadle drew himself up with great pride, and said, 'I inwented it.'

'You, Mr. Bumble!'

'I, Mrs Mann. We name our fondlings in alphabetical order. The last was a S,- Swubble, I named him. This was a T, - Twist, I named him. The next one as comes will be Unwin, and the next Vilkins. I have got names ready made to the end of the alphabet, and all the way through it again, when we come to Z.'

'Why, you're quite a literary character, sir!' said Mrs. Mann.

'Well, well,' said the beadle, evidently gratified with the compliment; 'perhaps I may be. Perhaps I may be, Mrs. Mann.'

[OT 6-7]

Oliver is 'half-baptised'; this means he was 'baptized privately or without full rites.'[Oxford English Dictionary]⁵⁹ Bumble exercises his institutional authority in naming the child. The alphabetic device used is infinitely repeatable, since having got to Z, one can recommence at A again. (This is a superb illustration of the systematic operations of institutions in general. The names of the foundlings will be distributed evenly through the letters of the alphabet.) The device is a little machine for

the generation of names. Bumble reveals his own malign nature by selecting unattractive and perjorative sounding names for the children, such as 'Twist' and 'Swubble.' ('Twist' may indicate both the twist of Oliver's birth and the turn of his fortunes.) Bumble names the children as a novelist must invent names for characters. Parents normally have only to decide on a forename, the surname being already given, but the novelist, like Mr. Bumble must invent everything. Mr. Bumble, then is something of 'a literary character'. The alphabet used as a device to produce names and narrative occurs elsewhere in Dickens' work, where it is usually combined with rhyme.⁶⁰ It is familiar from the mnemonic used to teach children their alphabet: 'A was an archer who shot at a frog...' which Dickens describes in 'Christmas Stories'⁶¹ When Mr Boffin calls upon Mortimer Lightwood, that lawyer's clerk, is the absence of a real list of clients' appointments (Lightwood has no appointments) runs his finger down a manuscript book and produces a list:

'Mr. Aggs, Mr. Baggs, Mr. Caggs, Mr. Daggs, Mr. Faggs, Mr. Gaggs, Mr Boffin. Yes, sir, quite right. You are a little before your time, sir. Mr. Lightwood will be in directly.'

[OMF 86]

The clerk, a 'dismal boy, whose appropriate name was Blight,' then makes a show of entering Boffin's name in the 'Caller's Book'.

'Mr. Alley, Mr. Balley, Mr. Calley, Mr. Dalley, Mr. Falley, Mr. Galley, Mr. Halley, Mr. Lalley, Mr. Malley. And Mr. Boffin.'

[OMF 87]

The 'strict system' [OMF 87], manufactured by the boy is a parody of the systematic operation of bureaucratic

institutions, which dehumanise persons and proliferate their own endless processes.⁶²

The substitution process use by the Meagles's in arriving at 'Tattycoram' ('Harriet we changed into Hattey, and then into Tatty...' [LD 18]) and Mr. Bumble's alphabetic device may be compared to the process Dickens himself used to create the names of characters. This process was used to create names from morphemes (the minimal unit of grammatical analysis below the level of the word) and syllables may be inferred from his manuscript notes and number plans. It is a substitution process.

Martin Chuzzlewig
Martin Chubblewig

Chuzzletoe
Chuzzlebog

Martin Chuzzlewit

Martin Chuzzlewig
Martin Sweezleden
Martin Chuzzletoe
Martin Sweezleback
Martin Sweezlewag

[MC 834]⁶³

Dickens had evidently decided upon Martin, then manipulated Chuzzle- or variants together with -wit, -wig, -back, -toe et cetera, until he discovered what he wanted. Notice that the suffixes are all meaningful words. 'Wit' and 'Wag' imply humour when used as human attributes, while 'back', 'toe' and 'wig' are body parts. 'Wit' is ambiguous, since it may denote humour or intelligence or understanding.

Dickens' manuscript note book, known as 'The Book of Memoranda' shows a list of 'available names' which include Magwitch, Provis and Pumblechook, together with names used

in other novels, and some not used at all.⁶⁴ There is also a list of terminations: -straw, -ridge, -brook, -bring, -ring, -ing, -ol, -ible and -son. Used in conjunction with the main stem of a name, for example Compey, these terminations were obviously used to produce variations - hence Compeyson. The list of names has two characteristics; names are separable into units which are either meaningful, or suggest meaning and repeated sounds create alliteration either of vowels, or consonants or both vowels and consonants. Stiltstalking used in Little Dorrit exemplifies both characteristics, being separable into Stilt-stalk-ing with vowel gradation and alliteration of /st/ and /l/, the sequence running /st/ + vowel + /l/ + either /t/ or /k/ + -ing termination. (Alternatively one might separate the units as Stilts-talk-ing, which suggests the connotation of still talking (continuous talking or to cease talking)).

Some names on Dickens' list seem to have been chosen for their unlikelihood thus making strange the naming process and thereby foregrounding its operation. The name of Mrs Ticket in Little Dorrit is both incongruous and suggestive of a society in which documentation proliferates. The unlikely Dickensian names seem often to have been chosen for the sheer pleasure of the repetition of their sounds, or for their connotations. Wegg, which is on the list, was used for Silas Wegg in Our Mutual Friend, where it rhymes with his missing leg.

It was not just the grotesque characters which were created by this process, David Copperfield was produced by an identical substitution process:⁶⁵

Stone	bury		David
Flower			Nahum
Brook		Wellbury	Copperboy
Well		Flowerbury	Topflower
boy		Magbury	Copperstone
field		Copperfield	
		Copperfield	

[DC 754]

The connotations of each of the individual elements and of the combined units were clearly of primary importance. Biblical christian names (David the young champion who slew Goliath) are combined with natural objects, stone, flower, brook, field. There are connotations of death; bury, flower and stone suggest the grave (flowers on a grave stone). Well and bury suggest depth, something concealed in the earth. Well is also an adjective and adverb, 'to bury well.' Copperfield itself has an autumnal suggestion, of ripeness of corn at the turn of the year. Stanley Gerson makes the interesting suggestion that Dickens chose a metal, 'copper', like the 'nickle' in Nickleby, that signified a character not of the purest, or most rare quality signified by silver or gold, but average and mundane.⁶⁶ These neutral metal names neither honour, nor condemn their bearers.

David Copperfield, like Philip Pirrip bears his deceased father's name. The legacy of his father at Blunderstone has an important part to play in the novel. One provisional title was 'The last Will and Testament of Mr. David Copperfield Being his Personal History Bequeathed as a Legacy. Mag indicates voluble talk, witches and the 'Old Saying' which Dickens quoted just above the list I have given:

"- And in short it led to the very Mag's Diversions."
And in short they all played Mag's Diversions

One of the many titles originally considered was '"Mag's Diversions." Being the personal history, adventures, experiences, and observations, of Mr. David Mag the Younger of Blunderstone House.' Thomas was also considered as an alternative to David as a christian name for Mag. Q. D. Leavis, Dickens: the Novelist⁶⁷ asserts

Too much has been made of the possible psychological implications of the fact that the novel's hero and the novelist have the same initials in reverse and of Dickens's being unaware of this or startled when Forster pointed it out to him. Dickens's first two choices of name for the hero had been 'David Mag' and 'Thomas Mag', and it was the novel David Copperfield, not its hero, that Dickens called his 'favourite child'.

However, as the christian name Charles actually appears in one alternative title (~~Mr. David~~ Charles Copperfield) and was deleted from another [DC 753-754] it is difficult to accept Mrs Leavis' assertion.

Sometimes Dickens was led to a Joycean play with other languages, notably French. Miss Mowcher in David Copperfield originated thus:

Miss Croodledey	.	
Miss Croodledy	.	No. Miss Mowcher
Miss Croodlejum	.	

[DC 763]⁶⁸

After experimenting with crude, lady with suggestions of crooked and croodle (a sound made to pacify babies) and cruel Dickens settled on Mowcher. Mowcher is French for 'to snuff out a (a candle)' or 'to blow one's nose'. As the physical appearance of the character was based on his near neighbour Mrs Seymour Hill, a dwarf who worked as a chiropodist and manicurist, Dickens found himself in correspondence with her

solicitor and was forced to amend the character during the course of the novel. To Mrs Hill he had the effrontery to suggest that he had thought the 'whimsical shadowy possibility of association... might be even amusing and serviceable to you.' ⁶⁹ It was fortunate for Dickens that the associations of Mowcher were not apparently recognised, or Mrs Hill might not have let him off so lightly.

Some of Dickens' word-play with names demands a knowledge of historical slang. In Oliver Twist Noah Claypole who has ill treated Oliver, runs away, and on joining Fagin's gang announces that his name is Morris Bolter [OT 292]. After spying on Nancy and betraying her to Fagin, when caught, he turns King's evidence against Fagin, receives a pardon, and is last occupied as a police informer tricking publicans into breaking the licensing laws then informing on them. [OT 366] A claypole is a pole made slippery with wet clay, Noah is climbing the slippery pole, a precarious feat.⁷⁰ Noah was a common christian name in Victorian times, the Biblical Noah had a propensity for getting drunk⁷¹ and proverbially had a drunken garrulous wife. Dickens' Noah has a red nose [OT 285] and likes his drink [OT 289].⁷² To morrice was slang for 'to make haste', the word is used in the novel in this sense [OT 47].⁷³ Eric Partridge in his Dictionary of Historical Slang also gives the meaning 'to be hanged' for morrice or morris. Bolter both runs away and is seen bolting his food. In making Claypole choose his own alias of Morris Bolter, Dickens signifies both his nature and probable fate; Fagin warns him of the gallows [OT 293] The christian name Morris has an identical sound to the slang verb to morrice.

The names Claypole and Morris Bolter preserve aspects of Victorian low-life in the pages of Oliver Twist. Claypole in choosing a new name to disguise his identity (he stole money from his employer when he ran away) has selected a name which conceals his nature as a coward and traitor likely to be hanged. His unconscious choice reveals who he is, or rather Dickens' deliberate signification has disclosed his identity even as the character tries to hide it. In reading the novel today some examination of the historical meanings of words is required to construct the possibilities of signification.

In conclusion, this chapter has drawn upon a wider range of post-structuralist work in attempting to theorise the functions of Dickensian naming. Whereas the previous chapter focussed on the diverse voices of Dickens' own time, the present chapter has been more influenced by the heteroglossia of contemporary literary studies. This serves as a reminder that the work of Derrida does not exist in isolation, but only in relation to other texts, Freud, Kristeva, Lacan, Hartman.... The psychoanalytic and post-structuralist strands of thought introduced were all concerned with how names consign personal and social identity. Such concern with identity was also manifested by Dickens, for the documentation of persons was a continuing demand of the state. As Carolyn Brown has pointed out:

...Increasingly in the nineteenth century, an immense apparatus is constructed to fix, locate, and stabilize the young and mobile population brought forth by the social and economic changes. Births, deaths and marriages must be registered... Existences become regulated, according to a system which becomes increasingly homogenized, in order to control an increasingly heterogeneous social body.⁷⁴

Dickens was interested in how names are used within the social unit of the family and in the wider social system. Naming is such an everyday process, that it is easy to overlook its importance in the maintenance of identity, state and patriarchal authority. By 'making strange' so many of the names of his characters, and by exploring the possibilities of situation where names have to be deliberately constructed, by foundling hospitals and parish authorities, Dickens foregrounds the ideological function of nomination. A frequent strategy of Dickens is to employ the common name of an article or process as the proper name of a character. In the case of Mrs Ticket, or Mr and Mrs Veneering, this has the effect suggesting that they possess the qualities of the article concerned, rather than any depth of human character. Dickens exploits heteroglossia in the construction of the names of his characters, this may be either through word-play, or through speculative etymology. However, it is not fruitful to adopt a code book approach to Dickensian names. Frequently more than one possibility suggests itself. Critics have often made monological interpretation of Dickensian names, but this is needlessly limiting and represses the heteroglossia of his style. In interpreting the possible meanings of names one needs to explore the relations between individual names and between the components which are combined to make up names. Naming is never innocent, it is deployed to deceive, trap and wound by means of language. Often the names of characters may carry contradictory messages from those ostensibly mentioned in the text. 'Morris Bolter' is no more aware of the possibilities of signification of his own name, than is Abel

Magwitch. The uttering or act of writing names seems to have had particular significance for Dickens. As I have argued when Pip names himself, is forced to give his name to Magwitch, or calls Estella, this becomes a calling into being, an act of possession or appropriation. In a Household Words article 'Gone Astray' in which Dickens describes getting lost as a small boy in London and wandering about the streets to see the Giants at Guildhall, there occurs an episode which seems to gather together Dickens' interests in names and writing.⁷⁵ During the course of the day, the young Dickens suffered from the attentions of boys, his clothes and when he spoke, his accent must have betrayed him as a lost bourgeois.

One boy, who had a stump of black-lead pencil in his pocket, wrote his mother's name and address (as he said) on my white hat, outside the crown. MRS. BLORES, WOODEN LEG WALK, TOBACCO-STOPPER ROW, WAPPING. And I couldn't rub it out.⁷⁶

(Capitals in original)

It is impossible to determine whether this scene is an accurate representation of what happened that day to Dickens, or whether elements of his own invention were introduced during the writing of the story, which seems to happen in many of his journalistic articles. The boy appropriates Dickens' hat by writing 'his mother's' name on it, which Dickens is unable to erase. The oddness of her name is added to by the incongruity of address. Language is here, as so often in Dickens, a means of struggle. This early recollection of going astray is a forerunner of countless explorations of London's streets together with their language and writing. In the next chapter, I shall consider the act of writing itself, together with the context of literacy.

Chapter 5

Literacy and Writing

Barbara Johnson in the 'Yale French Studies' memorial tribute to Paul de Man describes the practice of deconstructing specifically literary, as opposed to philosophical texts as follows:

By shifting the attention from intentional meaning to writing as such, deconstruction has enabled readers to become sensitive to a number of recurrent literary topoi in a new way. Texts have been seen as commentaries on their own production or reception through their pervasive thematizations of textuality- the myriad letters, books, tombstones, wills, inscriptions, road signs, maps, birthmarks, tracks, footprints, textiles, tapestries, veils, sheets, brown stockings, and self-abolishing laces that serve in one way or another as figures for the text to be deciphered or unraveled or embroidered upon.¹

One of the consequences of such an approach is that such readings tend to find the same figure of différance written everywhere, with the effect that the sense of the culture of the time is lost. Barthes' S/Z, while being an original reading which is likely to last, dissolves the historical formation of Balzac into the web of textuality, where, as Fredric Jameson has noted, it becomes hardly different from Philippe Sollers.² In attempting to historicise my textual reading of Dickens, I hope to capture some of the intentional meaning with regard to Victorian culture and society. In Dickens letters, tombstones, wills and marks on the body are

an intentional concern of the author, indeed he fabulates the plot around these texts.³ Deconstruction has frequently been accused of ignoring history; here I shall show how the text can be historically traced. There are two dangers in considering the function of writing in its social and historical context, the Scylla of textuality and the Charybdis of empirical history, outside the text. The first would treat all forms of writing as identical regardless of their specificity, the second ultimately refuses to acknowledge that discourse has any effects other than as a reflection of power which lies ultimately in persons or social forces.

In the midst of the famous description of Todgers's in Martin Chuzzlewit to which Dorothy van Ghent has drawn attention, there occurs the figure of a writer.⁴

The man who was mending a pen at an upper window over the way, became of paramount importance in the scene, and made a blank in it, ridiculously disproportionate in its extent, when he retired.

[MC 132]

It is tempting to imagine this as a portrait of the author surveying the scene before him, especially since Dickens' daughter Mamie asserted that he always used a quill pen. But it is far more likely to be a clerk, taking a breather before continuing with his work.⁵ The activity of mending a pen, of working at the material production of writing, is characteristic of the descriptions of writing in Dickens. Often in Dickens, the material production of writing is stressed, the mental and physical effort of using ink, paper and pen to produce writing is described in detail, as are

many attempts to discover meaning by reading. However, Dickens does not depict the novelist at work. In his own novels the writers are either struggling to master the writing process, or engaged in mundane writing, such as law copying. David Copperfield is the only novelist among his characters, and David's attitude to his work is reminiscent of Dickens' own as expressed in letters. David Copperfield has little to say about the art of creating his two novels.

I labored hard at my book, without allowing it to interfere with the punctual discharge of my newspaper duties; and it came out and was very successful.... It is not my purpose, in this record, though in all other essentials it is my written memory, to pursue the history of my own fictions, They express themselves, and I leave them to themselves. When I refer to them, incidentally, it is only as a part of my progress.

[DC 588-589]

Dickens himself is hardly more forthcoming. His letter to Forster explaining the idea of Great Expectations appears banal and oddly naive in its responses, when compared to the subtlety of his novels.

I have made the opening, I hope, in its general effect exceedingly droll. I have put a child and a good-natured foolish man, in relations that seem to me very funny. Of course, I have got in the pivot on which the story will turn too - and which indeed, as you remember, was the grotesque tragicomic conception that first encouraged me. To be quite sure I had fallen into no unconscious repetitions, I read David Copperfield again the other day, and was affected by it to a degree you would hardly believe.⁶

Dickens' comments on his work usually stress the effort of its production rather than interpret its meaning:

In a frenzied state of interest in Bleak House, I had got up at 5, and gone furiously to work, so that at about noon I was comparatively insensible.⁷

In recent years, work which examines the themes of writing and reading in Dickens has begun to appear, some of this, notably essays by Steven Marcus, Alexander Walsh and Murrey Baumgarten, draws on theoretical considerations of writing and literacy.⁸

An article by Robert Treacy, 'Reading Dickens' Writing' (1983) reproduces several common assumptions about writing.⁹ Treacy argues that in many nineteenth century novels there is a tension between the true, spontaneous, natural discourse of speech and the arts of reading and writing.

A written composition, formal, structured, intended to be read alone and silently by a single reader, to create a kind of closed circuit between writer and reader, is often presented as artificial and lacking in sincerity. It is contrasted with oral or spoken composition, the art of the gifted storyteller speaking in the presence of an audience, open to the audience's reactions, building the tale to some extent in response to those reactions, improvising, the tale sustained by the audience's interest and response, the speaking voice highly individualized and somehow, by its living presence, a guarantee of sincerity and natural truth.¹⁰

He argues that this is particularly prominent in Great Expectations 'where at times Dickens seems almost to have set out to illustrate Rousseau's belief (in his 'Essay on the Origin of Languages') that... '

Writing, which would seem to crystallize language, is precisely what alters it. It changes not the words but the spirit, substituting exactitude for expressiveness. Feelings are expressed in speaking, ideas in writing.¹¹

Curiously Treacy does not mention Derrida, even though Of Grammatology is centrally concerned with this theme and brought this obscure text of Rousseau's to prominence.

Treacy treats writing as a thing in itself abstracted from social formations which employ it. Thus:

Writing , it seems, controls people, and can harm or destroy them. It confers power over them, and is at odds with spontaneous feeling. Even the act of defining is a threat- when Mrs. Joe defines "hulks" and "escape" for Pip, she threatens him with prison.¹²

This is an oversimplified reification. It is not "writing" as such which controls people, but the persons and institutional structures which employ writing that exercise power. The question of the role of écriture in inscribing the form of these structures of power is subtle and difficult and not advanced by treating "writing" as an agent in itself. Treacy could have profited from reading Derrida on the role of écriture in speech. To say that "writing" or différance enables the legal and social differentiation of the "criminal" who is at once within society yet at the same time outside it (as Magwitch is both man and "Warmint") is different from mere reification of writing. Treacy by not examining the function of what he calls writing in specific discourses is prevented from examining such questions.

Murray Baumgarten in 'Calligraphy and Code: Writing in Great Expectations' suggests that much of our pleasure in Great Expectations comes from watching Pip learn to read and write.¹³ He is a hero of mis-reading. Pip confronts two

aspects of literacy; its calligraphic potential as writing which liberates the imagination and, opposed to this, the aspect of reading a code that directs, even imprisons the imagination by rules and laws. By calligraphy, Baumgarten means "writing that bridges hieroglyphic and phonetic systems." ¹⁴ Baumgarten rightly draws attention to the special devices Dickens uses in writing, but has an impoverished view of reading. For him writing is production, while reading is mere passive consumption.

Baumgarten draws on Ortega y Gasset, to make a point that is now more familiar from Derrida: the secret of writing is the making of the present self into an absence.

The book is the absence of the author, and the written word the previous flight of the one who pronounces it. We have a speech without the speaker present.¹⁵

Baumgarten's conclusion from this is certainly phonocentric.

To read Dickens as we all know is not to decipher and decode the rules of grammar and the laws of syntax but to listen to someone speaking personally to us. His writing has the plenitude of face to face encounters, of speech itself.¹⁶

But to adopt this position is to refuse to acknowledge reading as a semiotic process. Rather than examining the text, the import of these remarks is that we should listen to the voice of Dickens himself. Baumgarten later extends his considerations of writing in Dickens to David Copperfield.¹⁷ In this essay he draws on the comparative anthropological material in Goody and Watt's 'The Consequences of Literacy'¹⁸. The conclusion to the Copperfield essay presents writing

in a more positive aspect. Baumgarten links the novel, in David's words his 'written memory', with Mr Dick's Memorial into which King Charles' Head keeps intruding. (It is in the year of the two-hundredth anniversary of his beheading, that David Copperfield was written, Baumgarten informs us!)

The text as memorial is not only a petition or legal evidence... but also an historical artifact. Writing thereby serves as evidence - it is a legal witnessing of the real existence of the past as well as of its contemporary power and meaning. This text is a proof of the existence of the self - a Victorian articulation of a Romantic view of the nature of identity.¹⁹

Paradoxically, one might suggest that to need to see a text as 'proof of the existence of the self' indicates a certain unease, a troubling doubt that the contrary might be the case. Since writing functions as communication in the absence of the person who originally inscribed it, it seems to have promoted troubling questions as to the nature of the self. In Of Grammatology Derrida produced a tissue of quotations from Plato to J.L. Austin about this problem. Baumgarten's general prejudice against writing and hankering after a supposed golden age of oral culture shows the power of writing to disturb. While Baumgarten has amassed many interesting quotations and references to writing in Great Expectations and David Copperfield, his work would have benefited from a closer examination of the status of textuality. While he examines some contexts of writing at the moment of Dickens' inscription, he neglects the discourse of writing itself. A semiotic treatment of what Baumgarten terms calligraphy and hieroglyphics would have had greater explanatory force. Despite Baumgartens' obvious enjoyment of the novels, there is a persistent feeling that he relishes

the company of Dickens as an amusing story-teller, as distinct from being a reader of texts.

Franco Moretti in Signs Taken For Wonders (1983) made the following general point about literacy and culture:

If the majority of the population is illiterate, the written culture will oscillate between playing a wholly negligible part and having an overwhelming and traumatic function (as the printing of the Bible demonstrated). If, on the other hand, everyone is able to read, the written culture is unlikely to turn up such extreme effects, but in compensation it will become the regular and intimate accompaniment to every daily activity.²⁰

(By 'extreme effects' Moretti means the political response to the printing of the Bible in vernacular languages.)

While Colin MacCabe, who is here clearly building upon the work of Balibar, ^{and Macherey} Balibar²¹, sees the imperative towards universal literacy in the nineteenth century as a development of capital requiring a literate workforce for the next stage of industrial development. He suggests that:

Modernism can be understood... as an attempt within literature to come to terms with this new educational and linguistic situation in which the vast majority of the population are now literate and the relation between speech and writing, if regulated in the educational sphere is now deeply problematic.²²

Dickens' work can be located precisely within that stage of historical development in which there was a transition in English society from extensive illiteracy to widespread literacy. Indeed, by coincidence, Dickens' death in 1870 marked the passage of Forster's Education Act which set mass education on an official footing. During Dickens' lifetime the growth of literacy was immense and his work can be read

as a profound response to this phenomenon besides being itself shaped by these changes. Since the Victorian novel was pre-eminently a bourgeois art-form and a literate discourse, it is not unexpected that illiteracy appears within it only marginally. There is little illiteracy represented in the nineteenth century novel as whole, but in Dickens the complex questions of literacy provide a major theme which can be traced through numerous 'writing lessons' of which those between Pip and Joe in Great Expectations are perhaps the most memorable. (See page 231 below) The few examples of illiteracy, other than in Dickens' work are described from the outside. Anthony Trollope's The Warden (1855) describes a petition which six pensioners mark with a cross, because they cannot sign, while another, Job Skulpit, though he is able to sign, puts a mark so as not to appear conspicuous.²³ In Henry James' The Turn of the Screw (1898), the housekeeper, Mrs Grose, is an illiterate:

... I judged best simply to hand her my letter - which, however, had the effect of making her, without taking it, simply put her hands behind her. She shook her head sadly. 'Such things are not for me, Miss' My counsellor couldn't read! I winced at my mistake.... [And later]

'Do you mean you'll write-?' Remembering she couldn't, I caught myself up. 'How do you communicate?'

'I tell the bailiff. He writes.'

'And should you like him to write our story?'²⁴

The time of The Turn of the Screw is deliberately vague, the governess has been dead for twenty years before the tale is related and the events were supposed to have taken place many years before. This would bring the time to about mid-century. Doubtless housekeepers were expected to be literate, for otherwise, the governess would not have made

the mistake which made her wince - a social gaffe. But, in both these examples, illiteracy is not a major theme of the narrative. In Dickens the mechanics of literacy and writing are foregrounded, and while poor spelling is often the butt of his comedy, the problems of illiteracy are at the same time explored from within. Dickens, unlike Trollope and James, introduces elements of 'low' culture - the language of the urban streets- into the 'high' culture of the novel. He is concerned with the problematic that MacCabe describes, the transition from an oral culture to a literate one. Dickens has a genuine sympathy with people like Abel Magwitch who is so proud of Pip's ability to read in foreign languages and who graphically describes his own acquisition of literacy:

'A deserting soldier in a Traveller's Rest, what lay hid up to the chin under a lot of tatus, learnt me to read; and a travelling Giant what signed his name at a penny a time learnt me to write.'

[GE 329]

This story of literacy among those who contemporaries classed as 'the undeserving poor' is remarkable as an appearance in any novel. The 'Giant' is evidently able to capitalise on his ability to sign his name as much as on his freakish size. Magwitch learns not in any school, but in the company of outcasts.

Though articles which examine the themes of reading and writing in Dickens' novels have begun to multiply since Steven Marcus's study of Pickwick Papers [1972], very few of these have attempted to relate these themes to the situation of literacy in early nineteenth century England.²⁵ The reason for this is not hard to find. There have until

recently been few historical studies of literacy, and those that exist are quantitative rather than qualitative. In 1973, the historian, R.S Schofield, complained that '... the study of education in this period [1750-1850] is much less advanced than the study of economic growth.'²⁶ Despite the growing interest of historians in the history of education, Schofield's claim still holds good in 1989.²⁷

Lawrence Stone and R. S. Schofield, who have published work on literacy in the nineteenth century define literacy as the ability to sign one's name. Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act (26 Geo. II c. 33) of 1754 demanded that brides and grooms sign their names in the marriage register, so from that date there is evidence of this ability for both sexes and all classes. ²⁸ Of course, as Stone admits the precise relationship between being able to sign one's name and the ability to use writing as a means of communication is unknown, and likely to remain so. ²⁹

Stone's conclusions are these:

Comparing the 1642 and 1840 information, it now appears that the national literacy rate for males had risen from an estimated figure of somewhere around one-third in 1642 to exactly two-thirds in 1840, while the national average for women was one-half. In early Victorian England the bottom third of the population was cut off from the rest, not only by its abject poverty, but also by its illiteracy. There must have been a significant cultural barrier between the respectable, newspaper -and Bible -reading working class and the illiterate proletariat at the bottom of the heap. But after 1840 the growth of elementary education in Victorian England was so rapid that it took only another fifty years virtually to wipe out illiteracy altogether, both for men and women.³⁰

Stone provides a table of male literacy in England with Wales. I have extracted the relevant figures from it and

provided a list of some significant Dickensian dates for comparison.

1800 c65%

1812 Dickens born

1836 Pickwick Papers

1840 66%

1850 69%

1852 Bleak House

1855 70%

1860 74%

1860 Great Expectations

1864 Our Mutual Friend

1870 80%

1870 Dickens died

Stone comments that in the 1840's, especially, the rates of literacy were unevenly distributed geographically, the lowest rates, contrary to his expectation, being in the south of England (excluding the capital- which of course had a much smaller boundary than at present)³¹

<u>Area</u>	<u>Literacy</u>
London	88%
North and East of London	51%
Extreme North	81%

R. S Schofield concludes

The present consensus is that educational opportunities expanded during the period 1750-1850, so that by 1840 between 67% and 75% of the British Working Class had achieved rudimentary literacy. [There being considerable variation between urban and rural areas and between different occupational groups] ³²

In 1864, however, Dickens was still clearly preoccupied with the problems of acquiring literacy, for Our Mutual Friend

published in that year, richly explores that theme. Dickens concerned himself with the section of the population who were on the margins of literacy, besides which literacy had for him, as I shall explain, a symbolic significance.

There were many features which combined to produce what Robert Giddings describes as the 'revolution in literacy'.³³ Louis James in the introduction to his Fiction for the Working Man (1963) describes the development and growth of Sunday School and adult education movements, the latter was estimated to be teaching 3,500 adults to read by 1850.³⁴ There was a ready market for journalism and the popular press. A paper making machine had been patented by John Gamble in 1801, but was not used in production till the 1820's owing to trade opposition.³⁵ When it was introduced though, it resulted in larger sheets of better quality paper and for half the cost of hand-produced paper. The rotary steam press soon followed.³⁶ The growing railway system provided a means of distribution. Newspaper sales rose by 33% between 1816 and 1836 and by 70 % between 1836 and 1856.³⁷ Many of the articles in Dickens' Household Words are concerned with popular education and literacy, while some describe the production processes which enabled print to be distributed and circulated. 'H. W.' written with Henry Morley describes the production of Household Words itself, from manuscripts, through editing and rewriting, to the printing works, then finally to distribution.³⁸ Harry Stone, who has edited a two volume edition of these Household Words articles has attempted to identify the portions which were written

solely by Dickens. He also makes the point that Dickens regarded himself as the 'Conductor' of the magazine, that is he re-wrote and altered much of the content which originated from other hands, and would certainly not allow the expression of any view with which he disagreed in its pages. So we may conclude that Household Words is unlikely to have offended against Dickens' general views, whether or not he was the sole author of individual articles they contained.

Yet in Dickens' perception the progress towards universal literacy seems not to have been as rapid as Louis James and Robert Giddings suggest. In another article written with Henry Morley, 'Mr. Bendigo Buster on Our National Defences Against Education' (Household Words 28 December 1850) he ironically commented on the inefficiencies of English schooling compared with other developed European nations. Mr. Bendigo Buster is evidently a sporting gentleman, of a reactionary tendency:

... England, as a nation, don't trouble herself much about the education of the masses; something like forty-five out of a hundred of 'em can't read and write.... What I say is, reading and writing don't make shoes, and you can't work up A, B, C, into chairs and tables. Arithmetic won't make beds. When people are born to be cobblers, carpenters, or housemaids, they ought not to have their minds distracted, and be lifted out of their calling. Ignorance is nature; we are born ignorant, and we ought to be kept so.³⁹

The ability to sign one's name which historians like Lawrence Stone and R. S. Schofield use as an index of rudimentary literacy was unlikely to carry one very far in a rapidly changing society in which the exchange of written information became more and more important. As I have suggested, Dickens seems to have been especially interested in that portion of

the population who could not read and write easily, or were struggling to learn. Because of the rapid growth of a literate culture, they were particularly vulnerable. So while social historians suggest that literacy was already widespread by the mid-century, Dickens interested himself in the concerns and affairs of those who were excluded or on the margins of the literate culture. During a visit to Naples in 1844 Dickens described the operation of a scribe:

Here is a Galley-slave in chains, who wants a letter written to a friend. He approaches a clerkly-looking man, sitting under the corner arch, and makes his bargain.... The Galley-slave dictates in the ear of the letter-writer, what he desires to say; and as he can't read writing, looks intently in his face to read there whether he sets down faithfully what he is told. After a time, the Galley-slave becomes discursive - incoherent. The Secretary pauses and rubs his chin. The Galley-slave is voluble and energetic. The Secretary, at length, catches the idea, and with the air of a man who knows how to word it, sets it down; stopping, now and then, to glance back at his text admiringly. The Galley-slave is silent.... Is there anything more to say? inquires the letter-writer. No more. Then listen, friend of mine. He reads it through. The Galley-slave is quite enchanted. It is folded, and addressed, and given to him, and he pays the fee. The Secretary falls back indolently in his chair, and takes a book.⁴⁰

This 'Galley-slave' is a convict under armed guard employed as a sailor. While Dickens does not describe the use of a paid scribe in England, he does describe many roughly analogous situations in which people write for or read aloud to another.⁴¹ The metaphor of reading the face to understand the mood and intentions of another person is common to these situations. The Secretary is possessed of power and knowledge, while his customer admires his skill, becoming 'quite enchanted'.

Recent work on the concept of literacy, pre-eminently that of Brian Street, Literacy in Theory and Practice (1984) and that of Harvey Graff argues that the concept of literacy is not an ideologically neutral, 'technologising of the word', but is part of an entire social practice. The phrase 'technologising the word' was used by the social anthropologist Jack Goody and the literary critic Ian Watt in their influential early paper on the differences between oral and literate culture: 'The Consequences of Literacy' in Literacy in Traditional Societies edited by Jack Goody (CUP, 1968) Goody and Walter Ong later made much use of this term to characterise the supposed differences between oral and literate mentalities.⁴² However, most recent thought has tended to stress the inter-relation of oral and literate culture, rather than postulate separate spheres of existence.⁴³ Graff sets out to debunk the 'literacy myth' which suggests that literacy of itself will lead to social progress, civilisation and greater social mobility.⁴⁴ Graff's analysis of nineteenth century Canada suggests that literacy made hardly any difference to occupation and wealth as compared with the significance of ethnic and class origin. Indeed he sees the 'myth of literacy' as a means of exerting social control over the potentially disruptive masses.

Still, Dickens clearly saw literacy both as morally valuable and as a means of social advancement. He both participated in and helped form what Street and Graff term 'the literacy myth.' This is not surprising, for after all 'writing' in the form of journalism, court reporting and the production of novels sustained the youthful Dickens and eventually made him

both wealthy and successful. Literacy has a special place in Dickens' concerns, for the educational activities described in the fiction are almost entirely linguistic in orientation.⁴⁵ They are concerned with reading and writing. Great Expectations describes not only Pip's development of literacy, but it is also the story of Biddy becoming a school mistress and even Joe the blacksmith acquires considerable skill in reading and writing. The importance of literacy as a source of moral value can be seen in his treatment of Jo in Bleak House. The alienation of Jo is seen entirely as a question of literacy, rather than as a question of the distribution of wealth:

It must be a strange state to be like Jo! To shuffle through the streets, unfamiliar with the shapes and in utter darkness as to the meaning, of those mysterious symbols, so abundant over the shops and the corner of streets, and on the doors, and in the windows! To see people read, and to see people write, and to see the postman deliver letters, and not to have the least idea of all that language - to be, to every scrap of it, stone blind and dumb! It must be very puzzling to see the good company going to the churches on Sundays, with their books in their hands and to think (for perhaps Jo does think, at odd times) what does it all mean, and if it means anything to anybody, how comes it that it means nothing to me.

[BH 220-221]

Literacy is seen as a basic human need; deprived of it, Jo is 'stone blind and dumb.' It is the ability to read and write that sets humans apart from the animals: 'To see the horses, dogs and cattle, go by me and to know that in ignorance I belong to them.' [BH 221]

The town awakes; the great tee-totum is set up for its daily spin and whirl; all that unaccountable reading and writing, which has been suspended for a few hours, recommences. Jo, and the other lower animals, get on in the unintelligible mess as they can.

[BH 221]

Jo and his kind are compared to 'blinded oxen' who over-driven and over goaded 'often sorely hurt the innocent, and often sorely hurt themselves.' [BH 221] His response to music, it is suggested, is at the same level as that of a dog; but the dog, 'educated, improved, developed... 'who has been taught his duties and knows how to discharge them,' is otherwise far above him. [BH 222]

Turn that dog's descendants wild, like Jo, and in a very few years they will so degenerate that they will lose even their bark- but not their bite. [BH 222]

The poverty of this as political analysis, or as a philosophy of social change need not be over-emphasised. One has only to compare these passages with Engels' treatment of gross poverty in The Condition of the Working Class in England (1844), to realise the inadequacy of Dickens' proposed measures; in effect, Jo and his kind should be made literate in order that they may embrace Christianity and that a place should be found for them in the machinery of business and commerce. When Jo is dying, he dictates a will to Mr Snagsby, after first ascertaining that law-stationer is able to write in very large letters:

'Wot I was a-thinking on then, Mr. Snagsby, was, that when I was moved on as fur as ever I could go and cou'dn't be moved no further, whether you might be so good p'raps, as to write out, wery large so that any one could see it anywheres as that I was wery truly sorry that I done it and that I never went fur to do it; and that though I didn't know nothink at all, I knowd as Mr. Woodcot once cried over it and was allus grieved over it, and that I hoped as he'd be able to forgive me in his mind. If the writin could be made to say it wery large, he might.

[BH 647]

This declaration must be in writing and must be large so that it can be read. Jo, in his ignorance, has absorbed the lesson of the symbolic function of writing. It is an act of expiation that we may compare with Miss Havisham's request that Pip should write the words 'I forgive her' below her name on her writing tablets. [GE 377] Language is being used to heal and the prestige and deliberation of writing conveys greater power to the act of expiation.⁴⁶ Dickens juxtaposes with Jo's realisation of the power of writing his repetition of the Lord's Prayer after Allan Woodcourt [BH 649], a verbal petition for God's blessing. At the last Jo is not to be excluded from writing or Christianity after all. Snagsby and Woodcourt enable him to express his need.

The rapid rise of mass literacy in the Victorian period can be linked to the growth of bureaucracy, for increasing social administration and central organisation demanded literate subjects to fill in forms, reports and documents of all kinds. Several of the 'process articles' in Household Words illustrate this rise of an administered state system. With a growth of individual literacy came a burgeoning of the documentation of information. In 'The Metropolitan Protectives' Dickens praised the systematic operations of the Scotland Yard detective force:

We have seen that an incessant system of communication, day and night, is kept up between every station of the force;... we have seen that everything that occurs is written down, to be forwarded to headquarters.⁴⁷

But even as Dickens admired the workings of an administered system, his fantasies envisaged their confusion. In

'Valentine's Day at the Post Office' he turns from admiring the systematic processing of letters to imagining a dream in which they become all awry:

...Each [room] with its hundreds of sorters busy over their hundreds of thousands of letters - those dispatching places of a business that has the look of being eternal and never disposed of or cleared away - those silent receptacles of countless millions of passionate words, for ever pouring through them like a Niagara of language, and leaving not a drop behind- what description could present them? But when a sorter goes home... to his bed, does he dream of letters? When he has a fever (sorters must have fevers sometimes) does he never find the Welch letters getting into the Scottish divisions, and the London letters going to Jerico? When he gets a glass too much, does he see no double letters mis-sorting themselves unaccountably? When he is very ill, do no dead letters stare him in the face?⁴⁸

The efficiencies of the new penny post, in fantasy are overcome by a giant formless waterfall, a 'Niagara of language', while the sorter who must administer the system is imagined as delirious or drunk, letters 'mis-sorting themselves unaccountably', dead letters (a pun on letters unable to be delivered) staring back at him.

In another Household Words article, 'Received, a Blank Child', Dickens describes the history and present operation of the London Foundling Hospital, by extrapolating its story from an official document used by that institution as a receipt for children entrusted to its care:

Hospital for the Maintenance and Education of Exposed and Deserted Young Children. The blank day of blank, received a blank child. Blank, Secretary. Note- Let this be carefully kept, that it may be produced whenever an inquiry is made after the health of the child (which may be done on Mondays between the hours of ten and four), and also in case the child should be claimed.⁴⁹

Throughout this article Dickens plays on the meaning of 'blank' used as a gap in the various printed forms in which information such as the appropriate date, sex, given names and official reference number of the particular child is to be inserted. 'Blank' both substitutes for the information to be supplied and suggests that the abandoned child is a tabula rasa upon which its life is to be written. From the anonymity and generality of official forms Dickens generates particular narratives of individual human achievement. Such journalistic pieces as this illustrate how writing and the circulation of printed forms were used in the formation of a modern administered society. The themes of these articles are present in the novels and stories in a more oblique manner. For example, the plot of 'No Throughfare' [1867], written in conjunction with Wilkie Collins, hinges on the system of naming at the Foundling Hospital, and how this leads to a misapprehension of the identity of Walter Wilding.

Commercial as well as official and governmental paper-work increased in quantity during Dickens' lifetime. Advertising posters were commonly used to address a mass audience. An article entitled 'Bill-Sticking' which appeared in Household Words on 22nd March 1851 explores a curious fantasy by means of an informative treatment of these posters.⁵⁰ It was a characteristic of such articles in that journal to employ a narrative device in order to lighten the load of factual information regarding the particular industrial process or institution dealt with. In 'A Plated Article', for example the narrator represents himself as a talking plate, so that he can describe the process of making crockery from clay;

while in 'A Paper-Mill', he becomes rags which are processed into paper.⁵¹ 'Bill-Sticking' contains some anecdotal evidence as to the general state of literacy at the time, but it is the narrative device used to convey the information about advertising bills which I will concentrate upon. The narrative device takes the form of a fantasy, which according to the description of its origin in the article, began with Dickens as the victim feeling persecuted by the writing on bills. However, this was transformed, presumably as a means of defence, into an aggressive fantasy, where the narrator is not the victim of the words, but their author and controller.

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The narrator admits to being 'newly come down to London from the East Riding of Yorkshire' [UT 414], (presumably Dickens is using this mouthpiece so that he can describe the familiar as if it were new to him), and states that his reflections were sparked off by sight of an old building covered over with a succession of posters. He muses on the names familiar from the bills:

...what an awful thing it would be, ever to have wronged - say M. JULLIEN for example- and to have his avenging name in characters of fire incessantly before my eyes. Or to have injured MADAME TUSSAUD, and to undergo a similar retribution. Has any man a self-reproachful thought associated with pills, or ointment? What an avenging spirit to that man is PROFESSOR HOLLOWAY!

[UT 414- 415]

These are all familiar names and slogans. The most innocuous names or slogans could have strong personal associations as when Dickens saw the name Warren's Blacking in later life. An ordinary piece of trade advertising could awake the old trauma. Tony Weller deplores poetry in advertising.

"Poetry's unnat'ral; no man ever talked in poetry
'cept a beadle on boxin'day, or Warren's blackin'
or Rowland's oil, or some o'them low fellows; never
you let yourself down to talk poetry, my boy."
[PP 496]

The novels contain many similar examples of the working
through of the trauma of Warren's Blacking.⁵³

However, Dickens did not begin the article with the narrator
feeling persecuted by the posters, instead he imagines
himself as the aggressive party attacking an unnamed enemy.
This makes a powerful and hostile beginning to the piece.

If I had an enemy whom I hated and knew of
something which lay on his conscience, I would
introduce that into a bill and place it in the
hands of an active sticker. I can scarcely imagine
a more terrible revenge. I should haunt him, by
this means, night and day. I do not mean to say
that I would publish his secret, in red letters two
feet high, for all the town to read: I would darkly
refer to it. It should be between him and me and
the Posting-Bill.

[UT 413]

Here, what is a common medium of communication to everyone
who can read becomes a way of making a secret hostile message
to a specific person. For example, if the enemy had
surreptitiously taken a key, Dickens suggests he would invest
in the lock business and use the line SECRET KEYS on all
advertisements. The enemy would be confronted everywhere he
went by the reminder.

If he took a dead wall in his walk, it would be
alive with reproaches. If he sought refuge in an
omnibus, the panels thereof would become
Belshazzar's palace to him. If he took boat, in a
wild endeavour to escape, he would see the fatal
words lurking under the arches of the bridges of
the Thames. If he walked the streets with downcast
eyes, he would recoil from the very stones of the
pavement, made eloquent by lamp-black lithograph.
If he drove or rode, his way would be blocked up by
enormous vans, each proclaiming the same words over
and over again from its whole extent of surface.
Until, having gradually grown thinner and paler,

and having at last totally rejected food, he would miserably perish, and I should be revenged.

[UT 413]

Note that all the posters or signs mentioned are written, they are not pictures or ideographs, which had long been used as shop signs or inn signs. ⁵⁴

After encountering a gang of bill-stickers, the narrator follows them and questions their boss 'Might I be permitted to inscribe your name upon the tablets of my memory?' (Notice the appropriate metaphor which may be an echo of Hamlet!⁵⁵) The man responds '-no name particular- I am the King of the Bill-Stickers.' The man claims that his father begun the business in the parish of St Andrew's, Holborn in 1780, 'My father stuck bills at the time of the riots of London.' [UT 417]

Dickens then asks if there are any bill-stickers who cannot read.

Some...but they know which is the right side up'ards of their work. They keep it as it's given out to 'em. I have seen a bill or so stuck wrong side up'ards. But it's very rare.⁵⁶

[UT 422]

The dialogue with 'the king' tells the history of bill-sticking. There are at present 150 bill-stickers in London and the average work-load is 100 single sheets a day. [UT 423] So 15000 stickers were placed in London in a day. Dickens adds that newspaper advertising had greatly increased. [UT 423] Clearly for this advertising to be effective, the ability to read must have been relatively widespread. Besides its anecdotal value in fleshing out one of the uses of literacy in the metropolis, 'Bill-Sticking' explores a

fantasy of persecution by words which can be connected to similar doubts over the power of the written word often expressed in Dickens' novels, Krook's attitude to writing in Bleak House being the most striking. Like Freud, Dickens was expert at exploring the logic of the irrational. The fantasy described in this article could easily slip into paranoid delusion. Instead Dickens shows us how a writer might respond to the sight of a building covered with fragments of discourse, scraps of words. The use of printed media for the circulation of meaning is powerfully developed in this article.

As Colin MacCabe suggests, one of the causes of the vast expansion of mass literacy was a need to organise and administer a capitalist society. The writing of an individual could easily be multiplied and circulated by the new printing technology. The collection of information and documentation of all kinds rapidly expanded. Henry Mayhew's innovatory empirical sociology London Labour and the London Poor (1851) is obviously part of the requirement to document information, to represent it in print. Two of Dickens' novels Bleak House (1852) and Our Mutual Friend (1864) are particularly concerned with such documentation. But their treatment of the theme is somewhat different. Bleak House is concerned with the possession of documents, letters and wills, which are able to be manipulated in the exercise of power. Our Mutual Friend is more modern in that many of its documents are printed, and it deals with the reporting and information gathering of the police force, as an administrative organisation, rather than an individual like Bleak House's

Inspector Bucket. The documents of Bleak House are written, rather than printed. Kenge and Carboy's letter to Esther Summerson appears in the text of the novel in formidable legal shorthand and jargon:

Old Square, Lincoln's Inn

Madame,

Jarndyce and Jarndyce.

Our clt Mr. Jarndyce being abt to rece into his house, under an Order of the Ct of Chy, a Ward of the CT in this cause, for whom he wishes to secure an elgble compn, directs us to inform you that he will be glad of your serces in the afsd capacity....

We are, Madame, Your obed^t Serv^{ts},
Kenge and Carboy.
[BH 26]

In Bleak House, writing, rather than being a useful method of communication which simply represents speech and forms a more permanent record, enabling communication to take place over a distance of time or space, becomes an instrument of non-communication, of misinformation and ex-communication. We read of struggles to possess writing, also of the recognition of other people's secrets in writing, together with the danger that the act of writing will give oneself away. Writing is the source of mystery, a secret knowledge that confers power, but it is also a source of error, not to be trusted, liable to betray both addresser and addressee alike. Mr Guppy voices the novel's characteristic distrust: 'Being in the law, I have learnt the habit of not committing myself in writing...' [BH 404]. In this novel it is a paradox that the pleasures of reading and writing (aside from their manifestation in the style of the text itself) get short shrift; reading is not a pleasurable activity, but usually a futile attempt to discern the truth within a mass of legal documents. Smallweed sets the tone:

'Don't you read or get read to?'
The old man shakes his head with sharp sly triumph.
'No. no. We have never been readers in our
family. It don't pay. Stuff. Idleness. Folly. No.
no!'

[BH 297]

Imaginative writing is ignored by the readers of Bleak House, instead they pore over legal papers; the aptly named barrister, Mr Tangle makes his living from this: 'Mr. Tangle knows more of Jarndyce and Jarndyce than anybody. He is famous for it - supposed never to have read anything else since he left school.' [BH 5] Others, like Richard Carstone, are ruined by the effort expended in attempts to master the documents. Like reading, writing is a soul-destroying activity consisting chiefly of engrossing or copying documents. The personal writing represented consists of letters, which become a source of error and danger. Like Dr Manette's hidden records in A Tale of Two Cities, writing becomes detached from the consciousness of the writer to take on an independent existence, free from the author's control and able to be used by others against the interests and desires of the writer. Love-letters can become an instrument for the persecution of the beloved. Frustration of the writer's intentions lies at the heart of the novel. Jarndyce v. Jarndyce concerns a disputed will. A will is a written document that, when properly constructed and witnessed, 'signed, sealed and delivered', authorises the disposal of the testator's estate according to their wishes. The writing constitutes the will and ensures that the will is obeyed after death. A will 'speaks from death' as the legal phrase has it, that is, it is not operative until the death of the testator. Making a will is, to use the term of speech act

semantics, a performative utterance, the intention of the testator becomes immortal. But the will in Bleak House is frustrated, legal costs eat up the estate and 'the Will itself is made a dead letter.' [BH 95] A dead letter is one that cannot be delivered - the message has failed to get through to the addressee - figuratively one can oppose in the traditional metaphysics of writing, the dead letter to the presence of living speech. Writing has frustrated the original will, or intention of the testator whose will has failed. The discovery of the purported last Will among the litter of Krook's papers comes too late, for the case collapses into so much waste paper:

Presently great bundles of paper began to be carried out- bundles in bags, bundles too large to be got into any bags, immense masses of papers of all shapes and no shapes, which the bearers staggered under, and threw down for the time being, anyhow, on the Hall pavement, while they went back to bring out more.

[BH 865]

Copying, a form of writing which does not express the thought of the writer, but duplicates an already existing discourse, is an exemplary case of alienated language in Bleak House. Nemo, the nameless law-writer, is a copyist. Caddy Jellyby works as her mother's amanuensis [BH 38], writing to her mother's dictation. Caddy's liberation involves the education of Prince Turveydrop, who previously had experienced difficulty in writing:

She said, if he were not so anxious about his spelling, and took less pains to make it clear, he would do better; but he put so many unnecessary letters into short words, that they sometimes quite lost their English appearance. 'He does it with the best intention... but it hasn't the effect he means, poor fellow.'

Caddy ceases to write down her mother's words. Instead she teaches her husband how to write correctly, which is here how to write effectively.

One episode related by Esther, ties together the themes of copying and power manifested by writing in a particularly telling manner. Esther happens to enter a church, as a young couple are about to sign the register after the conclusion of their marriage. The groom to whom the pen is handed first 'made a rude cross for his mark.' Esther sees this with surprise, since she knows the bride to have 'quite distinguished herself in... school.'

She came aside and whispered to me, while tears of honest love and admiration stood in her bright eyes, 'He's a good dear fellow, miss; but he can't write, yet - he's going to learn of me - and I wouldn't shame him for the world!'

[BH 507]

Esther sees this as a touching example 'which suggested to me, with great consolation, how natural it is to gentle hearts to be considerate and delicate towards any inferiority.' [BH 507] This 'nobility in the soul of a labouring man's daughter' enables Esther to become reconciled to her scarred face. But one has only to imagine the reversal of roles, to postulate the groom copying his bride, by making a mark even though he is able to sign his name, in order to realise the ideological assumptions of the bride's action. In subjugating herself in marriage, she must publicly deny her ability to write, at least until they both are able to do so.

Esther Summerson is a reluctant writer; the beginning of her narrative, which commences in the third chapter of Bleak House admits this:

I have a great deal of difficulty in beginning to write my portion of these pages, for I know I am not clever.

[BH 15]

She is aware that she will not tell the entire story, but that there will be more, what one may term the other portion of the narrative, presumably that narrated in the third person.⁵⁷ No explanation for how the pages not attributed to Esther came to be written is provided. Esther's portion of the narrative is represented as writing, but the other portion is not attributed to anyone, nor is it represented as a written text; the conditions of its own production and their difficulties are concealed.

It seems so curious to me to be obliged to write all this about myself! As if this narrative were the narrative of my life! But my little body will soon fall into the background now.

[BH 26]

Esther, then is 'obliged' to write her story - but is this by an inner compulsion to tell her secrets, or an obligation owed to an external agency? Is she writing for money? There is the distinct suggestion that Esther knows that she is not the mistress of her own pen, that she is aware that someone, perhaps the author of the other portion is directing her. The frame of Esther's discourse is shown again at its close, which is also the closure of the novel. Esther is allowed to have the final words, but these are broken off in mid-phrase. [BH 880]. The final chapter of Esther's narrative is this:

Full seven happy years I have been the mistress of Bleak House. The few words that I have to add to what I have written, are soon penned; then I, and the unknown friend to whom I write, will part for ever. Not without much dear remembrance on my side, not without some, I hope, on his or hers.

[BH 877]

But who is this 'unknown friend' to whom Esther writes, of whom she has such 'dear remembrance', despite being unaware of their sex? She has surely not been obliged to write such a long epistle to the writer of the other portion. If she is referring to the readers of her pages, then her trust in their friendship appears misplaced, for in many instances they have failed as surely as the trusts that the Jarndyce will intended to set up.

Esther reflects on the pleasures and dangers of writing when she records compliments paid to her.

Well! It was only their love for me, I know very well, and it is a long time ago. I must write it, even if I rub it out again, because it gives me so much pleasure.

[BH 426]

By writing, Esther has made herself vulnerable, some 'unknown friends' reading between the lines construe her character in a less charitable light than surely either she, or her author intended. Her very self-effacement combined with her recording of complements made about her by others serve to show her true colours as the Fanny Price of Bleak House. Dickens' friend and posthumous biographer, John Forster, while he regarded the plot construction as 'perhaps the best thing done by Dickens', obviously thought that Esther's narrative was a daring mistake.⁵⁸

To represent a storyteller as giving the most surprising vividness to manners, motives, and characters of which we are to believe her, all the time, as artlessly unconscious, as she is also entirely ignorant of the good qualities in herself she is naively revealing in the story, was a difficult enterprise, full of hazard in any case, not worth success, and certainly not successful.⁵⁹

Recent feminist criticism is less charitable than Forster. Virginia Blain argues that though the device of dual narration has frequently been seen as the central issue in reading the novel, the difference of gender between the narrators has been disregarded.⁶⁰ She argues that 'the juxtaposition of the two narrative voices sets up a submerged dialectic between male and female viewpoints.'⁶¹ While not all commentators would go as far as Grahame Smith in actually describing the third person narrator:

I see the third-person narrator ... as urbane, witty, cultured; in short a man of the world, but a man of the world whose poise never degenerates into cynicism.⁶²

Blain is surely correct in her assertion that the narrator has been seen as unquestionably male.⁶³

Esther's is the 'inner' voice, his the 'outer' voice; hers is the subjective voice, his the objective; hers is personal, his impersonal.⁶⁴

While Esther's narrative is declared to be written, she has the intimate presence of speech, a self-conscious, private domestic discourse. The third-person narration is analytical and highly rhetorical, he deals with the public discourse of law and public health. The two narratives come together when Esther joins Bucket in his search for her mother. Most critics see this, in Taylor Stoehr's words, as 'a joining of the points of view in order to bring Esther and her mother

together.'⁶⁵ However, Blain rejects this view, she sees Lady Dedlock as a scapegoat who assumes all the ills of a sick society in order that her death can symbolically purify it.

The chase by Bucket, with the passive collusion of Esther, ostensibly to 'save' Lady Dedlock, has in fact resulted in her death-since the more relentless their pursuit, the more desperate her flight, and the more inevitable her end.⁶⁶ Esther must 'kill' her sinful mother in order to assume her allotted role as 'a happy and respectable wife and mother (of sons, of course)' ⁶⁷

The problem is that Dickens, a middle-aged man, chose to write part of the novel from the perspective of an ingenue young girl. Kate Flint, while praising Bleak House as 'the most obviously dialogic'⁶⁸ of Dickens' novels questions the narrowness of vision allotted to Esther concomitant with Dickens' view of her femininity.

Esther exemplifies some of what Dickens habitually presented as positive aspects of womanhood. But one can also question whether, in fact, his adoption of a woman's voice is linked in, at a conscious or unconscious level, with the limitations of perspective in her narrative. ... Dickens' insistence on the femininity of Esther's voice suggests that limitation of point of view... is a further aspect of her woman-ness.⁶⁹

Flint convincingly argues that Esther, unlike David Copperfield or Pip, does not achieve a total understanding of her earlier behaviour in the act of relating her life. However, Flint also argues that Bleak House cannot be neatly divided into two viewpoints, Esther's limited (individual, female point of view) as opposed to the omniscient (multiple, male) perspective. For the latter constantly invades the former, thereby undermining Esther's point of view.⁷⁰ Kate Flint's view, clearly influenced by the dialogic ideas of

Bakhtin, is a more responsive reading of the totality of Bleak House than that of Virginia Blain, which rigidly separates the two viewpoints, and emphasises the ending of the novel at the expense of what had gone before. In Bleak House, Dickens made a daring artistic experiment, one as John Forster noticed fraught with difficulty. The imaginative leap performed by Dickens was not far enough for contemporary feminist readers, who read the novel as complicit with the subjugated status of women in Victorian society. It must be admitted that Dickens succeeded in giving the illiterate a 'voice', whereas the voices of his women characters are muted, if they are not grotesques like Mrs Gamp.

Krook, the carnivalized inversion of the Lord Chancellor, sees the dangers of writing as he works amid the muddle of law papers he cannot read. He adopts a method of writing 'under erasure' to safeguard his power and knowledge. Esther's statement is applicable to him too:

'I must write it, even if I rub it out again,
because it gives me so much pleasure.'
[BH 426]

Krook is hoarding away quantities of waste paper in a well in the floor, keeping a tally of each packet by making a 'crooked mark' with chalk on the wall. He stops Esther as she is about to leave:

... and chalked the letter J upon the wall - in a very curious manner, beginning with the end of the letter, and shaping it backward. It was a capital letter, not a printed one, but just such a letter as any clerk in Messrs Kenge and Carboy's office would have made.

'Can you read it?' he asked me with a keen glance.

'Surely,' said I. 'It's very plain.'

'What is it?'

'J.'

With another glance at me, and a glance at the door, he rubbed it out, and turned an 'a' in its place (not a capital letter this time), and said, 'What's that?'

I told him. He then rubbed that out, and turned the letter r, and asked me the same question. He went on quickly until he had formed, in the same curious manner, beginning at the ends and bottoms of the letters, the word JARNDYCE, without once leaving two letters on the wall together.

'What does that spell?' he asked me.

When I told him, he laughed. In the same odd way, yet with the same rapidity, he then produced singly, and rubbed out singly, the letters forming the words BLEAK HOUSE. These, in some astonishment, I also read; and he laughed again.

'Hi!' said the old man, laying aside the chalk, I have a turn for copying from memory, you see, miss, though I can neither read nor write.'

[BH 57]

By this strange device, Krook has effectively prevented the permanent recording of his knowledge, for anyone looking suddenly in at the door would only see a single letter and be quite unable to read the word. Krook, though unable to read or write, uses this technique to impress Esther with his knowledge of the case, with his skill and cunning. Krook is merely copying, but has an insight into the symbolic function of writing, its power. By writing 'BLEAK HOUSE' and 'JARNDYCE', Krook would seem to prophesy, to encapsulate a secret link between these and Esther Summerson.

Later, on another visit, Esther and Mr Jarndyce are shown all over the house by Krook. Finally he takes them into the back part of his shop.

Here, on the head of an empty barrel stood on end, were an ink-bottle, some old stumps of pens, and some dirty playbills; and, against the wall, were pasted several large printed alphabets in several plain hands.

'What are you doing here?' asked my guardian.

'Trying to learn myself to read and write,' said Krook.

'And how do you get on?'
 'Slow. Bad,' returned the old man impatiently. 'It's hard at my time of life.'
 'It would be easier to be taught by some one,' said my guardian.
 'Aye, but they might teach me wrong!' returned the old man, with a wonderfully suspicious flash of his eye. 'I don't know what I may have lost, by not being learnd afore. I wouldn't like to lose anything by being learnd wrong now.'
 'Wrong?' said my guardian, with his good-humoured smile.
 'Who do you suppose would teach you wrong?'
 'I don't know, Mr. Jarndyce of Bleak House!' replied the old man, turning up his spectacles on his forehead, and rubbing his hands. 'I don't suppose as anybody would- but I'd rather trust my own self than another!'
 [BH 201]

Krook will never learn, since writing, unlike speech needs to be formally taught; one must be submitted to a teacher. Indeed writing demands inter-personal trust for communication to take place, this trust requires that the addresser will not abuse the writing, and it is this unavoidable Master-Slave relationship that Krook will not enter.⁷¹ The consequence of which is that Krook is thought to be ignorant and possibly deranged [BH 201]. In any human society, for an individual to refuse to speak is a mark of sickness, in a literate society, to refuse to write is a mark of ignorance. Socialization demands entering into power relationships with others; in refusing this Krook demonstrates the anti-social, paranoid, alienated behaviour analysed by R.D Laing in his classic study, The Divided Self.⁷² Krook's actions illustrate the difficulties and dangers of writing and the consequences of trying to avoid them. His is a pathological case which enables us to see what is involved in 'normal' written communication. There is a strange rationality to his actions, for these mimic the logic of writing itself; to

enter into language is castrating in the Lacanian sense, for one must submit to the law.

Writing is a method of encoding information, a written document becomes the nexus of power and knowledge, though, as I have argued, it is possible for information to be decoded from any document that is not intentionally encoded by the writer, for language is an inter-subjective social process and not the property of individuals. The communication model of language, while necessary, is not sufficient to describe the functions of language. Possession of written material is an appropriation of power. According to Tony Weevle, Krook is aware of this power:

'It's a monomania with him, to think he is possessed of documents. He has been going to learn to read them this last quarter of a century, I should judge...'

[BH 453]

Ironically, Krook really is possessed of documents, for he holds the bundle of letters from Lady Dedlock that tell the secret of Esther's birth, and among the piles of waste paper in his foul shop lies the final Jarndyce will that might have ended the long case, which in fact though, collapses as the entire estate is consumed by legal costs.

These somewhat obsessive concerns with the processes of reading and writing may be tentatively connected with Dickens' personal history. Peter Brooks in his Reading for the Plot and elsewhere has put forward a psycho-analytic description of narrative which does not seek to explain literature by means of psychoanalytic concepts, but conducts a dialogue between the texts of literature and those of

psychoanalysis, which privileges neither. Both reading\writing and psycho-analysis are examined in terms of the transference.

One can call the transference textual because it is a semiotic and fictional medium where the compulsions of unconscious desire and its scenarios of infantile fulfillment become symbolically present in the communicative situation of analysis. Within the transference, recall of the past most often takes place as its unconscious repetition, an acting out of past events as if they were present: repetition is a way of remembering brought into play when recollection in the intellectual sense is blocked by repression and resistance. Repetition is both an obstacle to analysis, since the analysand must eventually be led to renunciation of the attempt to reproduce the past, and the principle dynamic of the cure, since only by way of its symbolic enactment in the present can the history of past desire, its objects and scenarios of fulfillment, be made known, become manifest in the present discourse.⁷³

It is by way of these concepts, developed from Freud's 'Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through'⁷⁴ that we may best consider the obsessive repetition of lessons in the basic skills of reading and writing that occur in Dickens. Such a concern with the processes of reading and writing do not appear to occur widely in nineteenth century fiction, so why should Dickens return again and again to it? Like Mr Dick in David Copperfield, Dickens seems troubled by the intrusion of the King Charles' Head of basic literacy. Repetition is both the symptom of the past wound and the means of its cure. Mr Dick frees himself from the sterile reproduction of the memorial, by writing. It is tempting to see this as an allegory of Dickens' own writing.

John Forster describes Dickens' earliest desire in relation to words:

...He has frequently been heard to say that his first desire for knowledge, and his earliest passion for reading, were awakened by his mother, from whom he learned the rudiments not only of English, but also, a little later, of Latin. She taught him regularly every day for a long time, and taught him, he was convinced, thoroughly well. I once put to him a question in connection with this to which he replied in almost exactly the words he placed five years later in the mouth of David Copperfield. "I faintly remember her teaching me the alphabet; and when I look upon the fat black letters in the primer, the puzzling novelty of their shapes, and the easy good nature of O and S, always seem to present themselves before me as they used to do."⁷⁵

This is a paraphrase of Dickens' actual words in David Copperfield.⁷⁶ Edgar Johnson further describes the reading habits of the young Dickens:

At this time, Mary Weller recalled, he had not yet been to school, but Mrs Dickens, "a dear good mother and a fine woman," had taught him thoroughly well at home. He speedily became as his nurse put it, "a terrible boy to read," sitting with his book in his left hand, holding his wrist with his right hand, and constantly sliding it up and down while he sucked his tongue.⁷⁷

His nurses' name and the effect of her stories were to remain with the boy in his adult life. The repetitive action she describes during reading may be seen as a response to the rhythms of language- Kristeva's pulsions rather than in more crudely classic Freudian terms!⁷⁸

David Copperfield has long been recognised as the most directly autobiographical of Dickens' works. David appears to be the only child in Dickens' work who is taught to read and write by a parent, his beloved mother. Writing, though always physically difficult to control, takes place in a situation of domestic felicity, not at school, but at home where there is love and trust between teacher and pupil.

These writing lessons do not usually take place between parent and child. In Great Expectations it is Pip then Biddy who teaches Joe; in The Old Curiosity Shop, Nell teaches Kit; in Bleak House, Esther teaches her protege Charley. In Our Mutual Friend, the situation is rather different, Lizzie Hexham is the instigator of her brother, Charley's, education, her readings of the pictures in the fire constitute the lesson [OMF 28-29]. These lessons create an Eden of complete intimacy. David Copperfield, uncharacteristically taught by his mother, recalls this state of lost bliss:

I can faintly remember leaning the alphabet at her knee. To this day, when I look upon the fat black letters in the primer, the puzzling novelty of their shapes, and the easy good-nature of O and Q and S, always seem to present themselves again before me as they used to do. But they recall no feelings of disgust or reluctance. On the contrary, I seem to have walked along a path of flowers as far as the Crocodile Book, and to have been cheered by the gentleness of my mother's voice and manner all the way.

[DC 45-46]

However, according to the fragment of biography given in Forster's Life, Dickens seems to have responded with much more hostility and resentment to his mother, than to his father when remembering that period of life when he was withdrawn from school and sent to work in Warren's blacking warehouse, shortly before his father was imprisoned for debt. This seems to be because she wanted him to continue working at the warehouse. His father and Dickens' employer had quarrelled, and the young Dickens had been stopped from working:

My mother set herself to accommodate the quarrel, and did so next day. She brought home a request for me to return next morning, and a high character

of me, which I am very sure I deserved. My father said I should go back no more, and should go to school. I do not write resentfully or angrily: for I know how all these things have worked together to make me what I am: but I never afterwards forgot, I never shall forget, I never can forget, that my mother was warm for my being sent back.⁷⁹

One may conjecture that his rejection of her was greater because of her earlier role as a loving teacher. In the novels, he frequently eliminated the parents of major characters, his orphan children are taught by friends, siblings and in the case of Pip and Biddy it is the children who teach the adults.

In the David Copperfield passage above, the physical shapes of the letters is powerfully evoked; 'the fat black letters' with their new strange shapes. There is a pleasure in describing the substance of the letters, their materiality. The same phrase is used in 'A Christmas Tree', published 1850.

Thin books... with deliciously smooth covers of bright red or green. What fat black letters to begin with! "A was an archer, and shot at a frog." Of course he was. He was an apple-pie also, and there he is! He was a good many things in his time was A, and so were most of his friends, except X, who had so little versatility, that I never knew him to get beyond Xerxes or Xantippe- like Y, who was always confined to a Yacht or a Yew Tree; and Z condemned for ever to be a Zebra or a Zany.⁸⁰

When it comes to writing, the physical process is again emphasised, but now there is a difficulty of control over the letters to be overcome.

Writing was a trying business to Charley, who seemed to have no natural power over a pen, but in whose hand every pen appeared to become perversely animated, and to go wrong and crooked, and to stop, and splash, and to sidle into corners, like a

saddle-donkey. It was very odd, to see what old letters Charley's young hand had made; they so wrinkled, and shrivelled, and tottering; it, so plump and round. Yet Charley was uncommonly expert at other things, and had as nimble little fingers as I ever watched.

[BH 427]

Writing lessons involve a mixture of pain and pleasure, in which physical difficulty is overcome through desire to become competent and with the aid of a loving teacher. Nell teaching Kit in The Old Curiosity Shop is an example.

As the child came back directly, and soon occupied herself in preparations for giving Kit a writing lesson, of which it seemed he had a couple every week, and one regularly on that evening, to the great mirth and enjoyment of himself and his instructress. To relate how it was a long time before his modesty could so far be prevailed upon as to admit of his sitting down in the parlour in the presence of an unknown gentleman- how, when he did sit down, he tucked up his sleeves and squared his elbows and put his face close to the copy-book and squinted horribly at the lines- how, from the very first moment of having the pen in his hand, he began to wallow in blots, and to daub himself with ink up to the very roots of his hair- how, if he did by accident form a letter properly, he immediately smeared it out again with his arm in his preparations to make another- how, at every fresh mistake, there was a fresh burst of merriment from himself- and how there was all the way through, notwithstanding, a gentle wish on her part to teach, and an anxious desire on his to learn- to relate all these particulars would no doubt occupy more space and time than they deserve.

[OCS 28]

Dickens has devoted a paragraph to the writing lesson because such scenes are important to him. The need to take control of writing in order to be able to use it is the other side of the anxieties and doubts manifested in Bleak House.

In addition to the 'remembering, repeating and working-through' of Dickens' severed close relation with his mother,

there are two factors, I would argue, which may account for the frequency of introspection about the processes of reading and writing in Dickens. Firstly, the ability to read and write is closely connected with social advancement, as manifested in Pip's desire to become 'a gentleman'. Secondly, when he learned shorthand, Dickens subjected himself as an adult to a repetition of the processes which most people pass through as young children. In effect, he learned to read and write in another code. The process of learning a second language as an adult has often the effect of exposing features of the mother tongue which had previously been taken for granted. Learning Russian grammar exposes the student to the very different grammar of English. When Dickens taught himself the Gurney system of shorthand, this was a much more radical experience, for this shorthand is not phonological, but ideographic - it may be compared to learning to write in Chinese.⁸¹ The experience of learning shorthand is recorded in David Copperfield

[I] plunged into a sea of perplexity that brought me, in a few weeks, to the confines of distraction. The changes that were rung upon dots, which in such a position meant such a thing, and in another position something else, entirely different; the wonderful vagaries that were played by circles; the unaccountable consequences that resulted from marks like flies' legs; the tremendous effects of a curve in the wrong place; not only troubled my waking hours, but reappeared before me in my sleep. When I had groped my way, blindly, through these difficulties, and had mastered the alphabet, which was an Egyptian Temple in itself, there then appeared a procession of new horrors, called arbitrary characters; the most despotic characters I have ever known; who insisted, for instance, that a thing like the beginning of a cobweb, meant expectation and that a pen and ink sky-rocket stood for disadvantageous. When I had fixed these wretches in my mind, I found that they had driven everything else out of it; then, beginning again, I forgot them; while I was picking them up, I dropped

the other fragments of the system; in short, it was almost heart-breaking.

[DC 465]

Dickens, in time became an excellent shorthand writer, in the opinion of a colleague Dickens 'had the reputation of being the most rapid, the most accurate, and the most trustworthy reporter then engaged on the London press...'⁸² He worked as a reporter in Doctor's Commons and later in the House of Commons. Steven Marcus has rightly suggested that the prolonged experience of transcribing speech must have had a significant effect on the relation between speech and writing for Dickens.⁸³ Marcus suggests that

... this experience of an alternative, quasi-graphic way of representing speech had ... the effect on Dickens of loosening up the rigid relations between speech and writing that prevail in our linguistic and cultural system.....it allowed the spoken language to enter into his writing with a parity it had never enjoyed before in English fictional prose. Speech here was not the traditional subordinate of its written representation; it could appear now in writing with a freedom and spontaneity that made it virtually, if momentarily, writing's equal. And yet whenever a development of this magnitude takes place in writing, in literature, the capacities and possibilities of that written art are themselves suddenly multiplied and enhanced.⁸⁴

Marcus's article is far broader in scope, than later consideration of Dickens' writing. However, these observations come towards the end of the paper and are not developed in detail, especially in relation to Marcus' acknowledged sources in the psychoanalysis of visual art.⁸⁵ Writing in 1972, before semiotics became widespread in Anglo-American literary discourse and with Derrida's De la Grammatologie as yet untranslated, Marcus is rather simplistic in his conceptualisation of the relationship

between speech and writing. The 'spontaneity' of represented speech in Dickens prose is the result of accurate observation and hard work at the writing desk. The transcribing of speeches and the learning of shorthand functioned, I suggest, as an estranging device, the effect the Russian Formalists termed as ostranenie, and often transliterated as 'de-familiarisation'.⁸⁶ Dickens de-familiarises the communicative processes of writing and speaking, exposing the possibilities of signification. In Great Expectations, for example, after Mrs Joe is attacked, she is only able to communicate by writing upon a slate. [GE 115-117] As her handwriting was as poor as her spelling and Joe's reading abilities were just beginning, 'extraordinary complications arose between them', which Pip is required to solve.

The administration of mutton instead of medicine,
the substitution of Tea for Joe, and the baker for
bacon, were among the mildest of my own mistakes.
[GE 115]

Mrs Joe persists in tracing a character upon her slate, which looks like a curious T. Pip tries everything 'from tar to toast and tub'. At last he realises that the character is not T, but the iconic representation of a hammer. His sister begins to 'hammer on the table' and expresses a qualified assent. Pip produces hammers from the forge and even obtains a crutch, but it is Biddy who divines the meaning. She realises that Mrs Joe wants Orlick. 'She had lost his name and could only signify him by his hammer.' [GE 116] Orlick has been indicated by metonymy, the representation of the tool of his trade. Of course for Pip, the mystery is still unsolved, he expects to see Orlick denounced, instead he is placated, Mrs Joe having 'the bearing of a child towards a

hard master.' [GE 117] Each day she draws the hammer and Orlick comes to stand before her doggedly 'as if he knew no more than I did what to make of it.'⁸⁷

Dickens tends to play with the substance of language, using typographical devices to achieve the effect he seeks. For example in David Copperfield, David says drunkenly in two words:

'Steerforthyou'retheguidingstarofmyexist ence'
[sic]

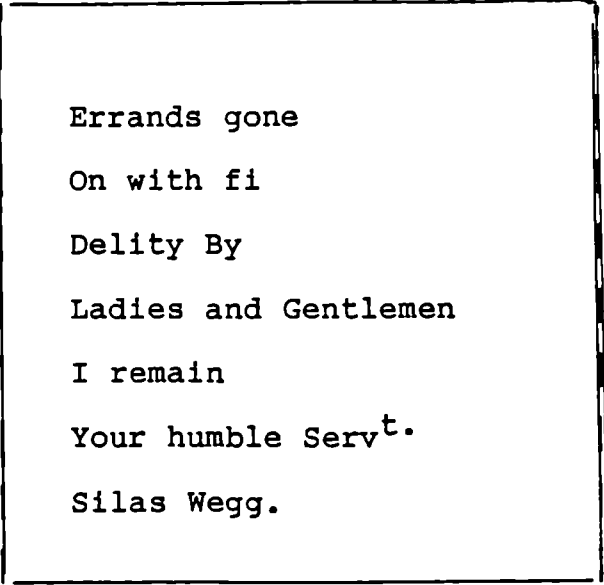
[DC 308]

The suffix of 'existence' is broken off and treated as a word, while the words comprising the rest of the sentence are run into each other. A good many of these effect rely upon homographs and homophones. David notices 'a certain similarity between the sound of the word skittles and Traddles his friend. [DC 342] Such chance associations are employed to manipulate a range of connotation. The name 'Uriah Heep' connotes 'urine' and 'Uriel' and 'heap' as a homophone of 'Heep', besides the Biblical Uriah.⁸⁸ Besides exploiting connotation, Dickens makes frequent use of graphic devices for particular effects. In Our Mutual Friend he brackets several lines together to suggest that they are spoken at the same moment, as in a play. The four buffers speak with one voice. [OMF 12] In Bleak House, Mr Guppy, when speaking to Lady Dedlock relies on an aide memoire:

'The fact is that I put down a head or two here of the order of the points I thought of touching upon, and they're written short, and I can't quite make out what they mean.... C. S. What's C. S. for? O! E. S! O, I know!'

[BH 405]

Writing has not assisted the fluency of his speech, but has obscured it. The muddle is increased by Dickens who writes 'O' instead of 'Oh', which leads to reader to think at first that this is the letter 'O' a part of Guppy's note, instead of an exclamation. In Our Mutual Friend, Silas Wegg's little advertising placard is depicted in the text:



Errands gone
On with fi
Delity By
Ladies and Gentlemen
I remain
Your humble Serv^t.
Silas Wegg.

[OMF 44]

The layout breaks 'fidelity' into two sections, so that each is read as a separate word, while the grammar suggests that it is Ladies and Gentlemen who will run the errands! The poster falls into two sections, the announcement 'Errands gone on with fidelity' and Wegg's subscript, written as it would be in a letter. The typographical devices mentioned are linked with the idea of social advancement as in the writing lessons of Great Expectations.

In 'Autobiography as De-Facement', Paul de Man describes the rhetorical figure of prosopopeia:

The fiction of an apostrophe to an absent, deceased, or voiceless entity, which posits the

possibility of the latter's reply and confers upon it the power of speech.⁸⁹

This figure, which is related to personification, apostrophe and anthromorphism may be seen as central to the activity of animating a text into dialogue. Bakhtinian dialogueism with its textual 'voices' is clearly a variant of this trope. It is also central to Dickens' practice as a writer. As Pip, in Great Expectations, imagines the persons of his mother and father behind their carved names, so David Copperfield fantasised about the as yet unknown other boys, whose names he sees carved on an old door when he is introduced to his school. David is fitted with a placard inscribed 'Take care of him. He bites', since he has been sent away from school after biting Murdstone. [DC 67]. David has the card fixed to his back, so that everyone is able to read it, but himself. He imagines that somebody is always reading it, even when he is alone. 'I knew that the servants read it, and the butcher read it, and the baker read it...' [DC 67] A fear of the power of the written word is mixed with the fear of a little gentleman that common tradesmen can read his reputation. When faced with the carved names bearing the names of the other boys, David begins to imagine how they will read his notice:

There was one boy -a certain J. Steerforth - who cut his name very deep and very often, who, I conceived, would read it in a rather strong voice, and afterwards pull my hair. There was another boy, one Tommy Traddles, who I dreaded would make a game of it and pretend to be dreadfully frightened of me. There was a third, George Demple, who I fancied would sing it.

[DC 68]

David fears that all forty-five boys will 'send him to Coventry' - not speak to him- and all cry out each in his own way: 'Take care of him. He bites!' This rather complex fantasy episode seems to encapsulate common Dickensian fears of the powers of language, especially of written language.⁹⁰

Considerable attention is paid to the processes of reading and writing in the text of Great Expectations. Pip's relations with Biddy and Joe are crucially defined by these activities. Pip's striving for social status and his progress in life is marked by a series of writing lessons.

Great Expectations begins with Pip reading his parents' gravestone. From the style of the inscription and the physical shape of the letters the young Pip derives impressions of his unknown father and mother's physical characteristics. His father, he imagines was 'a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair.' Whereas his mother is imagined as 'freckled and sickly' from the 'character and turn of the inscription 'Also Georgiana Wife of the Above.' [GE 1].

At the start of Chapter VII, Pip provides more information about his reading habits.

At the time when I stood in the churchyard, reading the family tombstones, I had just enough learning to be able to spell them out. My construction even of their simple meaning was not very correct, for I read 'wife of the Above' as a complimentary reference to my father's exultation to a better world; and if any one of my deceased relations had been referred to as 'Below,' I have no doubt that I should have formed the worst opinions of that member of the family.

[GE 39]

This undermines the assumption that Pip had correctly understood that sentence on the tomb stone, even if his derivation of his parents appearance from the shape of the letters was wild fancy. 'Above' and 'Below' refer to places in the text of the memorial inscription, rather than the metaphysical placement of heaven and hell, as the young Pip supposed! Pip attends an evening school run by Mr Wopsle's great aunt. The mature Pip is very severe about this establishment:

she was a ridiculous old woman of limited means and unlimited infirmity, who used to go to sleep from six to seven every evening, in the society of youth who paid twopence per week each, for the improving opportunity of seeing her do it.

[GE 39]

Pip is able to overhear Mr Wopsle reading aloud and have that gentleman declaim Mark Antony's oration over the body of Caesar, followed by Collins' 'Ode on the Passions' as Wopsle 'examined' the scholars.

Biddy, Mr Wopsle's great aunts' grand-daughter and an orphan like Pip, arranged all the shop business for Wopsle's great aunt, by reference to ' a little greasy memorandum book...which served as a Catalogue of Prices'[GE 40].

Much of my unassisted self, and more by the help of Biddy than of Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt, I struggled through the alphabet as if it had been a bramble-bush; getting considerably worried and scratched by every letter. After that, I fell among those thieves, the nine figures, who seemed every evening to do something new to disguise themselves and baffle recognition. But, at last I began, in a purblind way, to read, write, and cipher, on the very smallest scale.

[GE 40]

Pip then relates the story of his letter to Joe.

One night, I was sitting in the chimney-corner with my slate, expending great efforts on the production of a letter to Joe. I think it must have been a full year after our hunt upon the marshes, for it was a long time after, and it was winter and a hard frost. With an alphabet on the hearth at my feet for reference, I contrived in an hour or two to print and smear this epistle:

'MI DEER JO i OPE U R KRWITE WELL i OPE i SHAL SON
B HABELL 4 2 TEEDGE U JO AN THEN WE SHORL B SO
GLODD AN WEN i M PRENGTD 2 U JO WOT LARX AN BLEVE
ME INF XN PIP.'

[GE 40]

The format of the Oxford Illustrated edition, which I follow here, is identical to the letter's first appearance in print in All the Year Round.⁹¹ (I have represented the large capital letters by underlining them, all other letters except for 'i' are smaller capitals, 'i' is the only minuscule letter.) As a letter supposedly written by a child beginning to write, it contains some curiosities. All the letters except 'i' are capitals, but some capitals are larger than others. Apart from JO and ME (capitalised fittingly as the most important people then in Pip's life), plus single letter words, no large capital is ever used at the start of a word. However, large capitals are used at the end and in the middle of words! Besides this the numerals '2' and '4' are used to represent 'to' and 'for', while the single letter 'U' stands for 'you' and the letter 'B' for 'be'. The total effect is both strange and comic, the letter is more like a rebus than a straightforward depiction of a child's letter. Even at this stage, Pip wants to teach Joe, though he still hopes for 'larks' when he is apprenticed. The opening phrase 'My dear Joe, I hope you are quite well,..' is a conventional phrase used in letters - one may wonder how Pip is familiar with it.

The final phrase 'AN BLEVE ME INF XN PIP.' has provoked some comment. John O. Jordan remarks:

'He means to say "in affection," but he writes "infection." This inadvertent pun, made possible only by writing, discloses the shame that Pip has already begun to feel at Joe's lack of education. Literacy, it appears is a social disease that divides one class from another and can infect even the best of friends.'⁹²

Jordan in company with Garrett Stewart, also sees 'INF XN' as 'in fiction', thus producing 'and believe me in fiction Pip'. Jordan is very severe about Pip and about writing:

Pip's career in forgery does not end with the realization that he has been swindling himself. Having once left the forge, he cannot return to a condition of linguistic innocence. He cannot stop telling lies. If, as I believe the novel shows us, there is something "infected" about the medium of writing, then Pip has no choice but to forge his autobiography. Any written document involves falsification and Pip's is no exception. His narrative belongs in Wemmick's collection of curiosities that includes "several manuscript confessions written under condemnation - upon which Mr. Wemmick set particular value as being, to use his own words, 'every one of 'em Lies, sir.'"⁹³

This is both too severe and misleading, for the young Pip himself is manipulated by the demands and desires of others; namely Magwitch, Pumblechook, Mrs Joe and Miss Havisham. There was never any state of linguistic innocence at the forge, for Joe, though he tells the child 'Lies is lies', resorts to them himself, when he tells Mrs Joe what happened at Miss Havisham's. Moreover, as I have argued, his refusal to engage in conversation with Miss Havisham, may be explained as an effective strategy in refusing to participate in her discourse. Jordan confuses the category of a lie, with the category of fiction. Jordan's assumptions about the

infective and lying nature of writing depend upon those suppositions that Derrida traced from Plato through Rousseau. This is one of the few cases where one wishes that the effect of Derrida's ideas had been assimilated by American criticism! Since Jordan himself relies on writing is he spreading further infection and lies? Or does he suppose himself, as he supposes Joe to be, a linguistic innocent?

Pip, having presented his slate to Joe, discovers that the blacksmith can only pick out his own name:

'Why, here's a J.' said Joe, 'and a O equal to anythink! Here's a J and a O, Pip, and a J-O, Joe.'
[GE 41]

Neither Pip nor Joe know that his name is written with a final silent 'e' which marks the preceding vowel as long. This is a joke between Dickens and the reader. Dickens can make fun of the writing of illiterates, even those he treats sympathetically such as Joe or Tony Weller.⁹⁴ Before they visit Miss Havisham, Joe chalks 'HOUT accompanied by the sketch of an arrow' on the door of the forge, when they return he tells Mrs Joe that Miss Havisham had given him something for Mrs J Gargery. 'She mayn't have know'd... whether it were Joe or Jorge.'

'How do you spell Gargery, Joe?' I asked him, with a modest patronage.

'I don't spell it at all,' said Joe.

'But supposing you did?'

'It can't be supposed,' said Joe. 'Tho' I'm oncommon fond of reading, too.'

'Are you, Joe?'

'On-common. Give me,' said Joe, 'a good book, or a good newspaper, and sit me down afore a good fire, and I ask no better. Lord!' he continued, after rubbing his knees a little, 'when you do come to a J and a O, and says you, "Here, at last, is a J-O, Joe," how interesting reading is!'

I derived from this last, that Joe's education, like Steam, was yet in its infancy.

Pip questions him further as to why he never learned and receives the explanation that Joe's father so beat his mother and himself that she was several times forced to run away, consequently he never attended school regularly. Thus Joe's lack of formal education is connected to his tolerance of his wife's behaviour.

'I see so much in my poor mother, of a woman drudging and slaving and breaking her honest hart and never getting no peace in her mortal days, that I'm dead afeered of going wrong in the way of not doing what's right by a woman, and I'd fur rather of the two go wrong the t'other way, and be a little illconwenienced myself.'

[GE 45]

Despite his father's behaviour, Joe has forgiven him after the man's death.

'...And it were my intentions to have had put upon his tombstone that Whatsume'er the failings on his part, Remember reader he were that good in his hart.'

[GE 42]

Joe is proud of his couplet: 'I made it... my own self. I made it in a moment. It was like striking out a horseshoe complete, in a single blow.' [GE 43]. Indeed so pleased is Joe with his effort that he composes extempore variations upon the theme at significant moments during his life with Pip.⁹⁵

In commenting on this passage, Max Byrd manages to hit the nail on the head and catch his own thumb at the same time.

The speed of Joe's composition... in comparison with Pip's laborious writing reinforces our sense that in more than one way Joe is a 'natural' and knows already what Pip will take so long to learn. And the couplet on his father, which is an example of Joe's fictions (and which appears on a tombstone), also conveys a charity that eclipses.

Pip's modest patronage. Forgiveness of fathers in this novel is to be the right way of interpreting the meaning of adult life, the kind of fiction that does not collapse into falsehood, but instead permits the spontaneous and genuine poetry of Joe's couplet.⁹⁶

Certainly 'forgiveness of fathers' is an important theme of the novel, though one might notice that the mother figures, Mrs Joe and Miss Havisham are dealt with in a less forgiving manner. There are some points about Joe's couplet, however, which have been overlooked. Firstly from the evidence we are given Joe's father was not 'good in his hart', so the couplet would remember him as Joe wished him to be and not as he really was. Young Pip understands that at the time. Secondly, and Byrd is in error here, the couplet never was incised into the headstone.'... it were my intentions to have had it cut over him; but poetry costs money, cut it how you will, small or large, and it were not done.' [GE 43]. This points to a significant difference between speech and writing. Speech may be free, but writing costs money. Joe, significantly wanted to have his couplet preserved by writing and made available to everyone able to read it. In the course of the novel, Joe does learn to write, and critics who oppose the laboured writing of Pip with the spontaneous oral discourse of Joe will have a hard time accounting for this.

Joe associates literacy with rebellion, he warns Pip that when the boy begins to teach him: 'Mrs Joe mustn't see too much of what we are up to. It must be done ...on the sly. And why on the sly?.... Your sister's given to government.' [GE 44]

'Which I meanter say the government of you and myself.... And she ain't over partial to having.

scholars on the premises... and in partickler would not be over partial to my being a scholar, for fear as I might rise. Like a sort of rebel, don't you see.'

[GE 44]

Joe, no less than Pip associates learning, especially literacy with rising. The passage also shows that Joe is not quite the rural innocent he is often supposed to be, and quite prepared to do things 'on the sly' if necessary.

References to reading and writing are made by Joe when he consoles Pip after the boy has confessed to telling lies about his visit to Miss Havisham's.

'Why see what a letter you wrote last night! Wrote in print even! I've seen letters -Ah! and from gentlefolks!- that I'll swear weren't wrote in print.... you must be a common scholar afore you can be a oncommon one, I should hope! The king upon his throne, with his crown upon his 'ed, can't sit and write his acts of Parliament in print, without having begun, when he were an unpromoted Prince, with the alphabet- Ah!' added Joe, with a shake of the head that was full of meaning, 'and begun at A too, and worked his way to Z. And I know what that is to do, though I can't say I've exactly done it.'

[GE 66]

The joke is, of course, that Joe does not recognise that cursive script as opposed to printing should be used for correspondence. The activity at Mr Wopsle's great-aunt's school is described next, Pip having woken with the thought that he could best make progress by learning from Biddy everything she knew. [GE 68] A book containing an alphabet, some figures and tables and a little spelling is passed from hand to hand among the class. Then Biddy hands out

... three defaced Bibles (shaped as if they had been unskilfully cut from the chump-end of something), more illegibly printed at the best than any curiosities of literature I have since met with, speckled all over with iron-mould, and having

various specimens of the insect world smashed
between their leaves.

[GE 68]

All the children then read aloud together 'in a frightful chorus; Biddy leading with a high shrill monotonous voice, and none of us having the least notion of, or reverence for, what we were reading about.' [GE 68].

No writing appears to be done at this Dame School:

It is fair to remark that there was no prohibition against any pupil's entertaining himself with a slate or even with the ink (when there was any), but that it was not easy to pursue that branch of study in the winter season, on account of the little general shop... being but faintly illuminated through the agency of one low-spirited dip-candle and no snuffers.

[GE 69]

Pip realises 'that it would take time to become uncommon under these circumstances', and that evening begins private tuition with Biddy, who instructs him from the shop catalogue - under the head of moist sugar, then gives him some copying for homework.

a large old English D which she had imitated from the heading of some newspaper, and which I supposed, until she told me what it was, to be a design for a buckle.

[GE 69]

Great Expectations was published serially between 1 December 1860 and 3 August 1861. There are no explicit dates in the novel, but internal details suggest 'a chronology of action extending from 1807 at the start of the novel (when Pip is 7) to 1823 or so at the end (when Pip is 23)'⁹⁷ Such details include the number of bridges on the Thames, the use of flint and steel instead of a lucifer and references to 'His Majesty the King' and 'Bow Street Runners'.} The young Pip, moreover

lives in something of a backwater. The detailed physical description of schooling, and reading and writing at home also would appear to be located precisely at the period when a world long unchanged began to be affected by ideas of progress. Dickens, who was born in 1812, himself attended a Dame School with his sister Fanny, in Rome Lane, Chatham.⁹⁸ A good many of the points made by Keith Thomas in his article 'The Meaning of Literacy in Early Modern England' (by which he means the period between 1500-1750) seem to apply to conditions in Pip's childhood.⁹⁹ Thomas points to the distinction in being able to read printed material and being able to read handwriting. The teaching of writing was separated from the teaching of reading, it was learned, if at all, by older children from a different teacher. This would account for Joe's being familiar with the sight of print, but unfamiliar with handwriting. The letter Biddy copied from a newspaper headline, is evidently the gothic type called 'black letter'. Thomas remarks that this 'was the type for the common people'. It had been used in children's primers in the eighteenth century, but had been superseded by 'roman' type at the turn of the century. It was used for proclamations and Acts of Parliament. Joe, mentions the King writing his Acts of Parliament 'in print' [GE 66 passage quoted above] Wopsle has a group of men round him, listening to him read the newspaper when Jaggers first makes himself known. [GE 126]. No doubt that this is partly due to Wopsle's histrionic talents, but it also suggests that many of the men in that rural community are unable to read the newspaper privately in their own homes, and rely upon someone to read the news for them.

Pip continues to practice his writing with a broken slate and a stub of slate pencil, outside by the old Battery, on the marshes. There he can study and Joe smoke, away from the gaze of Mrs Joe.

Whatever I acquired, I tried to impart to Joe. This statement sounds so well, that I cannot in my conscience let it pass unexplained. I wanted to make Joe less ignorant and common, that he might be worthier of my society and less open to Estella's reproach.

[GE 102]

Despite this, Pip adds, 'I never knew Joe to remember anything from one Sunday to another, or to acquire under my tuition, any piece of information whatever.' [GE 102]

Mrs Joe is able to write, though she has 'very bad handwriting' and is 'a more than indifferent speller' [GE 115]. Her writing ability becomes the only means by which she can communicate after her assault.

Pip begins to spend his birthday guineas from Miss Havisham on learning. He begins to write with pen and ink and give himself tasks such as copying out passages from a book, 'to improve myself in two ways at once by a sort of stratagem.' [GE 118]

He is impressed by the manner of Biddy's seemingly effortless acquisition of his own range of knowledge as she keeps pace with him.

As the novel progresses the explicit theme of literacy is submerged as Pip becomes more competent. In London, Pip receives a letter from Biddy, telling him that Joe is coming up to town with Mr Wopsle.¹⁰⁰ It is addressed to 'My Dear Mr. Pip' and signed 'Your ever obliged, and affectionate

servant, Biddy.', but at Joe's request it contains a remembrance of their intimacy at the forge - a phrase used by Pip in his first ever letter to Joe:

P.S. He wishes me most particular to write what larks. He says you will understand. I hope and do not doubt it will be agreeable to see him even though a gentleman, for you ever had a good heart, and he is a worthy worthy man. I have read him all excepting the last little sentence, and he wishes me most particular to write again what larks.'

[GE 206]

(Emphasis in original)

Biddy's process of learning to write such letters receives no attention from Dickens. For Pip, the struggle to achieve literacy is over and in London written material becomes a part of his life. Communication with the village he has left behind takes place by letter. Trabb & Co write to inform him in most impersonal terms, of his sister's death.[GE 263]. Pip hears Wemmick's Aged Parent read the newspaper aloud and is reminded of his school classes in reading.[GE 283]. By the time he is twenty-three, Pip 'had a taste for reading, and read regularly so many hours a day.'[GE 298]. He has just finished reading when Magwitch reappears in his life. Magwitch, in hinting at the source of Pip's income, asks a question that resembles the spelling out of J. O. in Pip's first letter. 101

'There ought to have been some guardian or such-like, whiles you was a minor. Some lawyer, maybe. As to the first letter of that lawyer's name, now. Would it be J?.... Put it...as the employer of that lawyer whose name begun with a J, and might be Jaggers...'

[GE 303-4]

Magwitch is impressed by Pip's collection of books:

'mounting up, on their shelves, by hundreds! And you read 'em don't you? I see you'd been a reading of 'em when I came in. Ha, ha, ha! You shall read

'em to me, dear boy! And if they're in foreign languages wot I don't understand, I shall be just as proud as if I did.'

[GE 305]

Magwitch takes a pride in having been the means which have enabled Pip to be educated, having Pip read aloud in unknown languages will symbolise the higher state of knowledge the convict has raised him to.

Joe, too makes progress for Biddy teaches him to read and write, where Pip had failed. Pip, ill and exhausted watches him, while Joe writes to Biddy.

... it made me, in my weak state, cry again with pleasure to see the pride with which he set about his letter.... At my own writing-table, pushed into a corner and cumbered with little bottles, Joe now sat down to his great work, first choosing a pen from the pen tray as if it were a chest of large tools, and tucking up his sleeves as if he were going to wield a crowbar or a sledge-hammer. It was necessary for Joe to hold on heavily to the table with his left elbow, and to get his right leg well out of behind him, before he could begin, and when he did begin he made every down-stroke so slowly that it might have been six feet long, while at every upstroke I could hear his pen spluttering extensively. He had a curious idea that the inkstand was on the side of him where it was not, and constantly dipped his pen into space, and seemed quite satisfied with the result. Occasionally, he was tripped up by some orthographical stumbling-block, but on the whole he got of very well indeed, and when he had signed his name, and had removed a finishing blot from the paper to the crown of his head with his two forefingers, he got up and hovered about the table, trying the effect of his performance from various points of view as it lay there, with unbounded satisfaction.

[GE 440]

But if Pip is amused to see the massive blacksmith struggle with a pen with the same physical labour that he would employ with his tools back at the forge, he is cut to the quick by the letter Joe leaves him, after leaving early one morning.

'Not wishful to intrude I have departed fur you are well again dear Pip and will do better without.'

Jo.

'P.S. Ever the best of friends.'

[GE 447]

Joe has also signed a receipt for the debt upon which Pip was arrested. The comic elements of Joe's letters - he still spells his name 'Jo'- do not detract from the essential dignity of the man. The comedy is directed more at the difficulties of the writing process itself.

Pip does not write in reply, but hurries off back to the forge. He finds that Biddy is now the mistress of a school, and that Satis House is up for auction, with LOT 1 marked in 'white-washed knock-knee letters' on the brewery and LOT 2 on the house itself. 'The ivy had been torn down to make room for the inscriptions.'

I saw the auctioneer's clerk walking on the casks and telling them off for the information of a catalogue compiler, pen in hand, who had made a temporary desk of the wheeled chair I had so often pushed along to the tune of Old Clem.

[GE 449]

The terrors of Satis House are exorcised by the writing of commerce. The place is reduced to plots of building land docketed in a catalogue, with the lot numbers daubed on its fabric. The ivy which had slowly smothered the building ripped away for this purpose. Recollect that Pip had been taught to read from a shop catalogue. The language of commerce, a description of 'moist sugar' had been among his first written instructional materials. As an adult, having rejected the funds which would have enabled him to be a gentleman, he is employed in that solid respectable lower middle class occupation of clerk at the appropriately named

Clarriker and Co. [GE 455] In the days before typewriters, male clerks were employed in large numbers to write and copy all business documents. Reginald Wilfer in Our Mutual Friend is a portrait of a poor clerk as is Cratchit in 'A Christmas Carol'. Pip, unlike David Copperfield, is not a novelist and we never learn why or how his story of Great Expectations came to be written. It is commercial writing, not imaginative writing, that will dominate Pip's life.

The case of Mr Dick in David Copperfield forms a nice contrast to the distrust of writing in Bleak House. Moreover, since this obsessive writer who works to put right wrongs done to him by his relatives shares his name with the first element of Dickens' own and suffers the constant intrusion of King Charles' head, there are grounds for autobiographical parallels.¹⁰² It is tempting to equate the abandoned Memorial with Dickens' own unfinished 'Autobiographical Fragment' which he let Forster see either in January 1849 or May the previous year. Mr Dick is constantly writing a memorial of 'the Lord Chancellor, or the Lord Somebody or other.' [DC 175]. Unfortunately, he cannot keep references to King Charles the First out of his manuscript. Aunt Betsey interprets this as an expression of his troubled mind:

'That's his allegorical way of expressing it. He connects his illness with great disturbance and agitation, naturally, and that's the figure, or the simile... which he chooses to use.'

[DC 175]

Mr Dick has made a large paper kite, seven feet high, out of his manuscript paper very closely and laboriously written.

'There's plenty of string... and when it flies high, it takes the facts a long way. That's my manner of diffusing 'em, I don't know where they may come down. It's according to circumstances, and the wind, and so forth; but I take my chance of that.'

[DC 173]

In the eyes of the world, though not Aunt Betsey, Mr Dick is clearly mad, but like Krook, his pathological case teaches us a lesson about writing. He, in common with many authors, including Dickens, is a compulsive writer. He must trust himself to his writing, for it is not a question of expressing a pre-existing meaning, but of allowing the writing itself to shape that meaning. His works are published by allowing the kite to fly in the wind. Mr Dick must take his chance, as must any author as to what happens to his words when they leave his direct control. This is the danger of all writing. David Copperfield was serialized in monthly parts between May 1849 and November 1850. In 'A Paper Mill', written with Mark Lemon,¹⁰³ which appeared in Household Words 31 August 1850, the kite image is used.

Shining up in the blue sky, far above the Paper-Mill, a mere speck in the distance, is a Paper Kite.May all the paper that I sport with, soar as innocently upward as the paper kite, and be as harmless to the holder as the kite is to the boy! May it bring, to some few minds, such fresh associations; and to me no worse remembrances than the kite that once plucked at my own hand like an airy friend. May I always recollect that paper has a mighty Duty, set forth in so Schedule of Excise, and that its names are love, forbearance, mercy, progress, scorn of the Hydra Cant with all its million heads.¹⁰⁴

(There is a pun on 'Duty' here, elsewhere in the article Dickens protests at 'nonsensical' imposition of Excise Duty

on paper at 15/- per cwt, which he considered a harmful trade restriction.) It would seem that the kite, with its association of childhood play, a benign use for paper and string, is chosen by Mr Dick and Dickens for broadly similar purposes.

There is an affinity between Mr Dick and Doctor Strong. Indeed, they become firm friends, the Doctor reading out 'scraps of the famous Dictionary', while Dick believes 'the Dictionary to be the most delightful book in the world.' [DC 216] This fellow feeling is telling, for each man labours under the compulsion to write, to control and manifest knowledge by writing. Doctor Strong's obsession is no less a monomania than Mr Dick's and has blinded him to his wife's conduct with the ever attentive Jack Maldon. Such a narrowing of attention is necessary for the continuous production of writing and is the penalty paid for it. Interestingly enough, Mr Dick is cured, and his cure is brought about by copying, of all things, law-papers. This is in striking contrast to the law-writing in Bleak House. Traddles, who is himself in the law and a remarkably benign representative, and David set out two tables, one has laid upon it the legal documents for Mr Dick to copy, the other bears the Memorial. He is instructed to copy the documents exactly and when he feel any compulsion to make the slightest allusion to King Charles the First, to move at once to the Memorial.

My aunt reported to us , afterwards, that, at first, he was like a man playing the kettle-drums, and constantly divided his attentions between the two; but that, finding this to confuse and fatigue him, and having his copy there, plainly before his eyes, he soon sat at it in an orderly business-like .

manner, and postponed the Memorial to a more convenient time.

[DC 451]

Thus Mr Dick is able, by his writing, to earn money needed after Aunt Betsey has been ruined, and more importantly to free himself from the tyranny of the Memorial. If madness is defined, according to Foucault as an 'absence of works', then Mr Dick has ceased to be insane, having effected his cure by writing.¹⁰⁵ His compulsion to write is directed at last to productive ends. The last we hear of him is this:

My aunt informed me how he incessantly occupied himself in copying everything he could lay his hands on, and kept King Charles the First at a respectful distance by that semblance of employment; how it was one of the main joys and rewards of her life that he was free and happy, instead of pining in monotonous restraint; and how (as a novel general conclusion) nobody but she could ever fully know what he was.

[DC 716]

This happy conclusion, describing a victory over and through writing could not stand in greater contrast to the alienated law-copying of Bleak House. Alexander Welsh concludes that:

The disciplining of Mr Dick is both indirect autobiography and relatively straightforward Victorian celebration of writing and copying.¹⁰⁶

But what is not straightforward is why Dickens who satirized law copying, should have chosen law- papers of all things for Mr Dick to copy. Perhaps the answer lies in the desire to make Mr Dick useful. 'Mr Dick useful / Kettle Drums' reads the note in Dickens' number plan.¹⁰⁷ Dickens himself had been a stenographer both in the courts and in parliament, before turning to fiction, this is a sort of copying. David is a novelist and learns shorthand to transcribe speeches, another similar solution was needed, perhaps for Mr Dick. Whatever

the reason the attitude to law-copying in Bleak House begun only three years later was markedly different.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

At the risk of oversimplification, some general conclusions may be drawn from the explorations of literary theory I have undertaken and the examination of Dickens' treatment of speech, writing and literacy. Restatement of theoretical points and interpretation of Dickens' texts should also help to unify the entire study, which has deliberately covered some disparate areas. Conceptually it would have been possible to separate the development of literary theory from the stylistic and historical comment upon Dickens. While sequentially the first two chapters concentrated upon theory and the latter three upon Dickens, this is nothing more than a methodological convenience. The proposition that the whole of the work argues, is that theory cannot effectively be divorced from practice. Any literary study, commentary or interpretation will of necessity involve questions of theory, even if these are unacknowledged. Conversely, the discussion of literary theory must be grounded upon texts, if it is to be fruitful. Questions of language or semiotics must be focused by examination of examples of languages or signs. As mentors for producing literary theory and textual interpretation, I have taken Mikhail Bakhtin and Julia Kristeva. Linguistic, philosophical and historical material is intertextually related to the interpretation of texts, in

the present case selected novels and journalism of Charles Dickens.

The ideal of a purely literary history, even the marxist comparative literary history of John Frow which ambitiously attempts to unify theories of language, literary studies, western marxist theory and post-structuralism is rejected.¹ Instead I have sought to follow Bakhtin in relating literary texts to the historical processes of language and culture. While such an enterprise follows the contemporary turn towards history, and may be seen as part of a New Historicism, it does not in itself seek to outline a new way of writing literary history, but is a form of historical stylistics. An essential component, but not the sole means of understanding literary texts within their historical and cultural context. I have not made any sustained analysis of any other novelist than Dickens, moreover I have been selective rather than exhaustive in my choice of novels and journalism. I have sought to relate the texts to the theoretical points at issue, and also to relate them to various forms of non-fictional language, such as the registers of law, boxing and grammar. Any sustained reflection on the rich linguistic diversity of Dickens' writings ought to lead to socially and historically grounded questions about the workings of language, its power and authority in human society. Much of the initial impetus for the study of Dickens came from dissatisfaction at attempts to catalogue his styles of writing, this tends to produce a virtual card-index in book form of which the most recent example is Robert Golding's Idiolects in Dickens (1985).

While such work describes the superficialities of varieties of language, it lacks any theoretical base from which to come to terms with the profound explorations of language and innovations within language which Dickens undertook. It is also blind to the historical and cultural contexts of Dickens' work. As Bakhtin argued in 'Discourse in the Novel' any stylistic analysis cannot be productive outside of an understanding of heteroglossia, the diversity of 'voices' in any given era.

The 'Bakhtin School' however, did not distinguish between speech and writing as modes of signification, for they regarded a book, in Voloshinov's words, as 'a verbal performance in print.'² The work of Jacques Derrida has stressed the gaps between consciousness and both written and spoken language. Both Bakhtin and Derrida are critical of the communication model of language in which a message is sent from one autonomous human being to another. The communication model was expressed most clearly by Roman Jakobson's 'Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics' delivered at a conference on style in language in 1958. However, the assumptions of Jakobson can be discerned in much stylistic work which is not explicitly based upon his own practice. The 'Jakobson diagram' in which a message is sent from an addresser (or sender) to an addressee (or receiver) through the medium of a common code, can be said to describe the classic model of language as communication. But rather as contemporary physics has found it necessary to supplement Newtonian physics with quantum mechanics, in order to explain particular phenomena, thereby introducing a multiplicity of

conceptual objects and incommensurable theories, so Jakobson's classic diagram has been supplemented by the work of Bakhtin and Derrida. Supplement has here the Derridian logic of an addition to an original, thus revealing a lack in the original, but also a copy of the original which may serve as the replacement for the original. The tortuous baroque syntax of Derrida and multiple repetitive styles of Bakhtin in which his own 'voice' speaks through that of other writers, are separate strategies for questioning the assumption of full communication. Building upon Tzvetan Todorov's reading of Bakhtin in the existential tradition, I have argued that Bakhtin's concept of dialogue was grounded by the absence of interlocutors. His own spoken and written words were ignored and marginalised for much of his life. Bakhtin, the internal exile who produced celebrations of physical excess while his own body was wasted by disease, who acclaimed dialogue in the absence of conversation with like-minded scholars or even receptive readers can now be read as much more akin to Derrida as a philosopher of language than is customary.

I have given an interpretation of Derrida's attitudes towards language, writing and literature. While this is in no way intended as an 'explanation' of his philosophy, it does go some way to account for its difference from orthodox western thought. Robert Scholes' complaint in a recent essay in Critical Inquiry that 'separation and alienation are not the whole story of human consciousness'³ and that Derrida's view of language is both nihilistic and inadequate, is characteristic of a view that habitually sees language and

literature from within the Anglo-American world of letters. But Derrida's importance lies in his being an outsider to this broad tradition. French, German and English within which he works are not the languages of his homeland or people, there is no single language within which he 'dwells' in the Heideggerian sense. Derrida's talmudic footnotes to Heidegger focus on the Shibboleths, the discriminative, differences and deferrals of national language literature, and philosophy. Because of this, he is the natural philosopher of post-colonial societies in which many accents, languages and races mingle. I have not sought to apply Derrida's texts to Dickens in a page-by-page manner. Instead I have drawn freely upon his techniques and devices and sought to underpin a concept of 'negative linguistics' by reference to his writings.

By analogy with negative theology, theology which does not ask what God is, but rather what God is not, negative linguistics proceeds via negativa to question what linguistic communication is not. As existential theologians struggle to make sense of a post-Nietzschean world in which the idea of God has died, so deconstruction must come to terms with a world of textuality and discourse in the absence of communication. As Christine Brooke-Rose wrote in 1981: 'The Jakobson diagram ... has been exploded.'⁴ In Chapter Two, I examined the Jakobson diagram of language as communication. Then the inverse of negative linguistics which parasitises the communication model was examined. Etymologically communication is cognate with common. However, being united through a common language to someone, means necessarily that others are excluded. In negative linguistics the agonistic

functions of language are to the fore. The connotation, context and implicit meanings demand, as Felix Guattari argued, an analysis which encompasses more than mere individuals.⁵ Within negative linguistics, I have attempted to encompass the stress on the graphic trace and absence of the speaking subject characteristic of Derrida's work, and the interest in the diversity of social discourses, characteristic of Bakhtin.

In chapter three, the theories of Bakhtin and Derrida are applied to reading Dickens. Heteroglossia, according to Bakhtin is subject to two contending forces, a centrifugal motion which diversifies language and a centripetal which strives for unity. Following Bakhtin, I have not attempted to unify the fissiparous nature of Dickens' styles, by separating the language of individual characters, without relating these to extra literary discourses. I have treated literary language as merely a domain of the socio-linguistic continuum which encompasses all discourse, rather than as an area possessed of special characteristics. It follows therefore, that there can be no attempt to write a Dickensian poetics. Speech in the novel is always inferred, never present. Dickens' Cockney is by no means an accurate representation of the real speech traits of the inner London working class, instead it serves to amuse, perplex and foreground social and linguistic difference. The 'W' and 'V' substitution, in The Pickwick Papers and elsewhere shows a complex mediation between text, sound and graphics. The courtroom scene deals with power and knowledge in a social discourse, rather than being merely amusing. Dickens'

language demands being looked at as well as listened to, and I have drawn upon Derrida's work to consider the function of graphic devices employed.

Dickens was intensely aware of the sheer variety of language used in society. He was interested in the substance of language itself, the materiality of spoken and written signifiers. However, the graphic devices and frequent puns should not be seen as something indulged in for their own sake, for they are often used to demonstrate the ways in which language can perplex and enlighten, wound and console, unify individuals into social groupings and at the same time exclude others. Dickens was skilled at appropriating the discourses of others, at juxtaposing, merging and parodying different registers. As specific examples of types of discourse represented and parodied within the novels, I have considered the 'Flash' language of a semi-criminalised sub-culture, legal language, and pugilistic jargon. These examples were selected because they each show the incorporation of a specialised variety of language into the public domain of the novel. Finally, the discourse of Lindley Murray's grammar and Dickens' parodied variations upon it were examined. The intention here, by a self-reflexive move adopted from Derrida, was to disclose the nature of Dickens' frequent transgressions of grammaticality. Instead of merely writing about the language of others, Dickens incorporated it into his own. Thus, misunderstanding through language is not merely described, it is explored in the text itself. In Bleak House, the reader, like Lady Dedlock, is forced to struggle with the alien discourse of

Jo. Because of this Dickens' work is informative about the linguistic shibboleths of his age. Yet while it is easy to see the rich variety of Dickensian language as a celebration of heteroglossia, the parodies and ungrammatical formations may equally serve as recognition and reinforcement of the socio-linguistic rules. As Umberto Eco wrote, one 'must feel the majesty of the forbidding norm, to appreciate [its] transgression.'⁶ The transgression of the norms of English spelling is only meaningful within a context in which educated readers and writers are aware that there exist norms to transgress. It is for this audience, and not the illiterate, that Dickens wrote his novels. In the same way the wonderful parody and misapplication of grammar put into the mouth of Wackford Squeers in Nicholas Nickleby is only understandable given some knowledge of nineteenth century prescriptive grammar.

In the fourth chapter, the study of heteroglossia is continued by examining the function of names in Dickens. The oddness of Dickensian names foreground the process of giving and bearing names, which is such an everyday occurrence that it is easily overlooked. Names are used to consign both personal and social identity. The variety of Dickensian names indicates the limitations of attempting to decode their essential meanings. Any understanding of Dickensian naming must be aware of the possibilities of heteroglossia inherent in the frequent plays on words. Naming is seldom innocent in Dickens, but is often concerned with appropriation and possession. The moment of uttering or inscribing a name is often invested with particular significance. Nomination, as

in the case of Pip in Great Expectations, is often the means of generating narrative.

Mass literacy grew at a rapid pace during Dickens' lifetime, following Balibar and Balibar,⁷ ^{and Machefey} its growth may be cautiously linked with the development of the capitalist mode of production and more directly with the development of a concomitant administered society. At first glance, it is curious that Dickens should have been concerned with the problems of reading and writing, since never before had so large a proportion of society been literate. Recent sociologically orientated work by Brian Street⁸ and Harvey Graff⁹ has argued that literacy, of itself, was no guarantee of social progress in any society, apart from other factors such as class, gender and mobility. Street, in common with social historians, such as Peter Burke, also argues that it is misleading to separate oral and literate cultures into separate domains with individual mentalities, instead one should investigate the inter-relationship of orality and literacy in specific cultural contexts.¹⁰ Reading Dickens tends to confirm this view, for oral and literate cultures are thoroughly intermingled in his work. Dickens drew on the street life of London as no novelist had done before, bringing aspects of it within literary discourse. In doing so he produced the images of London life that we recognise as urban Victorian metropolitan society. But it is important to remember that this is as much a literary invention as a depiction of 'the real world'. Indeed frequently one cannot disentangle the artistic organisation from its counterpart in the world. The representation of Cockney speech, for

example, seems to be built out of previous literary stereotypes, combined with a large proportion of Dickensian invention. The oral culture of Victorian street life is strictly speaking unknowable now apart from literary texts, and for most contemporaries, Dickens was their guide to this alien world. Writing was the means of Dickens' own social advancement, a means of achieving wealth and fame, besides being one of the main focuses of his life. His memories of learning to read and write are bound up with those of his first teacher, his mother. The 'Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through' of these intimate lessons are replayed in the many writing lessons described in his work. Besides this, Dickens took an active interest in that shrinking proportion of the population that was excluded from literacy, most often by poverty, but occasionally as in the case of Gaffer Hexham, in Our Mutual Friend, by ignorance. The historian Lawrence Stone expressed the opinion that there existed 'a significant cultural barrier' between the respectable Bible and newspaper-reading working classes and 'the illiterate proletariat at the bottom of the heap.'¹¹ While literacy of itself may have been no guarantee of social progress, it is clear I think, that Dickens, in common with many other people saw literacy as a symbolic divide within English society. Jo, in Bleak House, is excluded by his illiteracy as much as by his poverty, from the generality of English life and culture.

Dickens' struggles to master the intricacies of the Gurney system of shorthand described fictionally in Nicholas Nickleby, seems as Stephen Marcus has suggested, to have

alerted Dickens to the possibilities of graphic signification.¹² Acquiring as an adult, an alternative means of signification, seems highly likely to have foregrounded the processes of writing English. Dickens, with his involvement in journalism and magazine editing, had an interest in the circulation of media messages, this led to such articles as 'Bill-Sticking' which depict mass-communication, while at the same time exploring fantasies of defence and persecution by writing. All these factors combine to produce an interest in what we now know as textuality. The possibility of writing to signify in the absence of the addresser, beyond the original context of enunciation, which is a potentiality both tragic and liberating is thoroughly explored in Dickens.

-- Notes --

Chapter 1. Language, Text and History

1. Exceptions include Steven Connor, Charles Dickens (Blackwell, Oxford, 1985); Kate Flint, Dickens (Harvester Press, Brighton, 1986); David Trotter, Circulation: Defoe, Dickens, and the Economies of the Novel (Macmillan, 1988)
2. J. Hillis Miller, 'The Triumph of Theory, the Resistance to Reading, and the Question of the Material Base' PMLA, 102, No.3 (May 1987) pp. 281-291
3. The Social History of Language, edited by Peter Burke and Roy Porter, Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture (CUP, Cambridge, 1987) The Marxist historian Gareth Stedman Jones has attempted to introduce semiotic considerations into social history: his Languages of Class (Cambridge, 1984) was given a cold reception by those who had praised his earlier Outcast London, because they thought he had watered down the politics. Dominick LaCapra, Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts Contexts, Language (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1983) introduces the ideas of Bakhtin to the history of ideas. The work of Haydon White, for example Tropics of Discourse (Baltimore, 1978) draw on narrative theory and Foucault in an examination of the writing of history.
4. A jaundiced view of this trend is given by Tony Skillen 'Discourse Fever' in Radical Philosophy Reader, edited by Roy Edgley and Richard Osborne (Verso, 1985) pp. 325-336
5. See page 7.
6. The argument that Derrida matters as an irrationalist philosopher has been cogently made by Richard Rorty The Consequences of Pragmatism (University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1982), while Rodolphe Gasche has argued that Derrida's work should be read in a philosophical rather than a literary context in 'Deconstruction as Criticism,' Glyph, 6 (1979), pp. 177-216
7. The persistence of the model can be gauged from the proceedings of a much later conference which attempted to assess the relations between linguistics and literature since the Indiana conference. See The Linguistics of Writing: Arguments between Language and Literature, edited by Nigel Fabb and others (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1987). The contributions by Geoffrey Leech, M. A. K. Halliday and Henry Widdowson replicate the Jakobson diagram unchanged, while the possibility of any alternative is only

available by inference from other contributions - especially those by Mary Louise Pratt, Derrida himself, and the interjection of Anthony Easthope after Halliday's paper. See The Linguistics of Writing p. 11.

8. Peter Steiner, Russian Formalism: a Metapoetics (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1984) especially pp. 201- 210. Steiner draws on Elmar Holenstein, Roman Jakobson's Approach to Language: Phenomenological Structuralism (Bloomington, Indiana, 1976) which deals with the influence of Husserl upon Jakobson

9. For Derrida's use of telepathy, telecommunication, and the postal relay see La Carte postale de Socrate à Freud et au-delà (Aubier-Flammarion, Paris, 1980)

10. Robert Scholes, 'Deconstruction and Communication' in Critical Inquiry 14 (Winter, 1988), pp. 278 - 295 (p. 290)

11. Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, Mikhail Bakhtin, (Harvard Uv Press, Cambridge Mass. and London, 1984)

12. See Ken Hirschkop, 'The Domestication of M. M. Bakhtin', Essays in Poetics 11, 1, (April 1986), pp. 76-87 and 'Bakhtin, Discourse and Democracy', New Left Review 160 (November-December 1986) pp. 92-112. Alex Callinicos 'Postmodernism, Post-Structuralism, Post-Marxism?' Theory, Culture and Society, 2,3,(1985) pp. 85-101 demonstrates the interest in Bakhtin for contemporary Western Marxist theoreticians.

13. Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, edited and translated by Caryl Emerson, Introduction by Wayne Booth (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984) first published Moscow 1963. Rabelais and His World, translated by Helene Iswolsky (MIT Press, Cambridge Mass. and London, 1968) first published Moscow 1965. The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin, edited by Michael Holquist, translated by Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1981) first published Moscow 1975. Published in the names of P. N. Medvedev and M. M. Bakhtin, The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: a Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics, translated by Albert J. Wehrle (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1978) first published Leningrad 1928. Published in the name of V. N. Voloshinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, translated by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (Seminar Press, New York and London, 1973) First published Leningrad 1930 and Freudianism: a Marxist Critique (Academic Press, New York and London, 1976) Published Leningrad 1928

14. Krystyna Pomorska seems to have been the first to used the phrase 'Bakhtin's school' in her introduction to the English edition of Bakhtin's Rabelais (1968), p. 1x

15. Julia Kristeva, 'The Ruin of a Poetics', in Russian Formalism: a Collection of Articles and Texts in Translation edited by Stephen Bann and John E. Bowlt (Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1973) pp. 102-119 (p. 102) first published

in French 1970. Kristeva's 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel' in, Desire in Language: a Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art edited by Leon S. Roudiez, translated by T. Gora and others (Blackwell, Oxford, 1980) pp.64-91 is also concerned with Bakhtin.

16. See for example Allon White 'Bakhtin, Sociolinguistics and Deconstruction' in, The Theory of Reading edited by Frank Gloversmith (Harvester, Brighton, 1984) pp. 123-145

17. On the tendency for everyone to read Bakhtin in their own interests see Paul de man, 'Dialogue and Dialoguism' while Wayne Booth has convincingly argued that though Bakhtin discusses Rabelais' attitude towards women, the female voice does not enter Bakhtin's dialogue. See Wayne C. Booth, 'Freedom of Interpretation: Bakhtin and the Challenge of Feminist Criticism' in Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues of His Work, edited by Gary Saul Morson (University of Chicago, Chicago & London, 1986) pp. 145 - 176. Todorov criticised the lack of analytic and critical analysis in the Clark and Holquist Biography in a review: Times Literary Supplement 14 June 1985 pp. 675-676

18. Voloshinov p. 23

19. Bakhtin is often read as our contemporary, but of course he was not. One of the difficulties in reading Bakhtin is in identifying the positions which he was contesting. Criticism of any Stalinist orthodoxy was extremely hazardous, and here, as elsewhere Bakhtin seems to have employed a covert means of criticising orthodoxy. Nikolij Jakovleich Marr was the Lysenko of Soviet Linguistics, the son of a Scotsman and Georgian woman he became professor of Armenian and Georgian philology at St. Petersburg. He argues that languages were the product of specific classes and that different languages emerged at different stages of evolutionary development, since they were wholly determined by the economic base. This crude application of Marxism was mingled with Marr's curious 'Japhetic' theory which reduced all languages to developments from four monosyllables. Marr's views were imposed on Soviet linguistics from the thirties until they were abruptly terminated by Stalin himself who proclaimed that language was not part of the superstructure. Obviously the whole affair had much to do with the status of national language in a federation of Soviet states and the tendency for emergent nation-states to insist that a national language should be common to all. Marr's ideas are discussed by Giulio Lepschy in Developing Contemporary Marxism, edited by Zygmunt G. Baranski and John R. Short (Macmillan, 1985), pp. 199 - 228 (especially pp. 207 -210) What is clear from even a cursory glance is that the context of Bakhtin's theories cannot be understood except in relation to the orthodoxy of which marrism was such a curious part.

20. Colin MacCabe, 'Opening Statement: Theory and Practice' in The Linguistics of Writing, edited by Nigel Fabb and others, pp 286- 306. Compare this with James and Lesley Milroy Authority in Language: Investigations in Language Prescription and Standardisation (Routledge, 1985)

- 'As far as possible we have attempted to exclude prior ideological commitment- i.e. our approach has not been developed within any particular socio-political theoretical paradigm.' (p. xii) Milroy and Milroy naturally see this as a recommendation.
21. MacCabe 'Opening Statement: Theory and Practice' p. 297
 22. Allon White, 'Bakhtin, Sociolinguistics and Deconstruction' p. 144
 23. Suzanne Romaine Socio-Historical Linguistics (Cambridge, 1982) is as MacCabe notes a welcome exception, in arguing that the written language should be part of sociolinguistic study.
 24. Voloshinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language pp. 85-86
 25. See MacCabe 'Opening Statement: Theory and Practice' in The Linguistics of Writing, edited by Nigel Fabb and others, pp. 286-306, together with the books by Lyotard, Deleuze and Guattari and Derrida referred to in the next chapter of this study.
 26. Voloshinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language p 94
 27. For Bakhtin's views of philology see Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, pp 71-79. Modern linguistics of nearly all schools states its origin in Saussure's Course, yet much of that book addressed to students of comparative philology is opaque. It is clear that an adequate history of linguistics, which is sorely needed, would be required to examine the methods and practice of philology, a subject now confined to the dustbin of intellectual history. Nietzsche's 'Wir Philologen' is an indication of what the discipline demanded, while his Genealogy of Morals shows to what purpose such a training could be put. Jakobson, too was trained as a philologist and could be said to have never lost his taste for the comparative method. John Lyons, Theoretical Linguistics (CUP, 1968) pp. 21- 37 gives a brief overview of philology, while Michel Foucault, The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences (Tavistock, 1970) while full of intriguing suggestions is only marginally concerned with comparative philology - see pp. 280- 302, Foucault's general consideration of language appears too dominated by Port Royal from this side of the channel, to be seen as a general history.
 28. Kristeva 'The Ruins of a Poetics' p. 110
 29. Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 183
 30. Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 184
 31. Dialogic Imagination pp. 252-253
 32. I owe this point to Professor Graham Martin

33. See The Dialogic Imagination pp. 48 -49, which calls Onegin 'Pushkin's novel.' Partial exceptions are made in the case of 'low' forms- satire and polemic- which are conceded as being heteroglossic. Bakhtin's literary tastes seemed to have been classical rather than modernist, Mayakovsky's poetry was as full of heterogeneous voices as anyone could wish for, yet it was Roman Jakobson rather than Bakhtin who responded to his work. It may be that constructivism and montage are responded to in the form of Bakhtin's work, rather than his choice of topics.

34. Dialogic Imagination, p. 262-263

35. On the differences between novelistic speech and actual speech see Norman Page, Speech in the English Novel Second Edition (Macmillan, 1988)

36. Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination p. 416

37. I take Walter Benjamin's 'Arcades Project' to be, along with Bakhtin's 'Discourse in the Novel' to be one of the most important pieces of Marxist cultural thought. The subtlety, and experimental nature of Benjamin in relating the material base to art and language, shows that one should not expect to read one off in terms of the other directly, yet mysticism, obscurantism and ad hoc analogies provide a constant traps into which Benjamin sometimes falls. See Walter Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism, translated by Harry Zohn (Verso, 1983) and Adorno's critical correspondence on the project in Aesthetics and Politics: Debates between Bloch, Lukacs, Brecht, Benjamin and Adorno edited by Ronald Taylor (Verso, 1980), pp. 110-141

38. Notoriously Gerard Genette rejects the terms 'point of view', 'vision' and 'field' because of their specifically visual connotations, in favour of his own term; focalization! Narrative Discourse (1980) p. 186. There is a real problem here, film theorists are to be envied, for they can use the specular vocabulary of Lacan with impunity. The consequences of metaphor and the impossibility of avoiding it are discussed by Derrida in 'White Mythology.' The term reflection is a key term in Marxist theory, this is a likely source for Bakhtin's idea

39. Bakhtin, Dostoevsky p. 181

40. See Voloshinov, pp. 57-58 and compare Michel Foucault's description of universal sciences of measurement and order in The Order of Things pp. 46-77

41. Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics p. 181-182

42. Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 182

43. Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 182

44. I have referred to The Complete Works of Tolstoy, edited by V. G. Chertkov, Tome 18 (Moscow, 1934; Krauss Reprint, Nendeln and Liechtenstein, 1972), pp. 190-191. My Russian is

minimal, but one needs scarcely any to appreciate the point I am making here.

45. L. N. Tolstoy Anna Karenina translated by Rosemary Edmonds (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1978) pp. 198-199 and compare with the Russian text.

46. A. N. Wilson Tolstoy (Hamish Hamilton, 1988), p. 233 notes that contemporary reviewers of War and Peace objected to the amount of French in the text, he also points out that a man of Tolstoy's education and background could well have chosen to have written novels entirely in French, so it was a deliberate choice to write in Russian.

47. John Frow, Marxism and Literary History (Blackwell, Oxford, 1986) pp. 158-169

48. Frow, p.159. [Author's emphasis]

49. Little Dorrit Penguin edition p. 181-182 cited by Frow

50. Kristeva, 'The Ruin of a Poetics'

51. Bakhtin recalls Marc Bloc in Speech Genres and Other Late Essays translated by Vern McGee, edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (University of Texas, Austin, 1986, p. 167 and Introduction p. xiii and xxi

52. Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination p. 417

53. Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination p. 420

54. Frow, Marxism and Literary History p. 98

55. Frow, Marxism and Literary History pp. 98-99

56. Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination, pp. 301-308

57. Dialogic Imagination p. 308

58. Dialogic Imagination p. 301

59. Marxism and Literary History, p. 163

60. Marxism and Literary History p. 163

61. Marxism and Literary History, p. 164

62. Dialogical Imagination p. 300

63. See Dialogic Imagination p. 418

64. Dialogic Imagination, p. 418

65. Holquist, 'Introduction', Studies in Twentieth Century Literature: Special Issue on Mikhail Bakhtin, 9, 1 (1984), p. 8

66. Soviet Short Literary Encyclopedia quoted by Todorov, Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle p. 10
67. Todorov, Mikhail Bakhtin, p. 111
68. Bakhtin 'The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology and the Human Sciences: An Experiment in Philosophical Analysis' in Speech Genres and Other Late Essays pp. 103-131
69. Speech Genres p. 126
70. Speech Genres pp. 126-127
71. Speech Genres p. 127
72. Speech Genres p. xiii
73. Speech Genres pp. 126-127
74. 'What is a text' in Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation, edited and translated by John B. Thompson (CUP; London, 1981) pp. 144-164
75. Ricoeur, 'What is a text', p. 147. Wolfgang Iser, The Act of Reading (Routledge, 1983), p. 166 makes similar points to Ricoeur.
76. But see Michael Ryan, Marxism and Deconstruction: a Critical Articulation, (John Hopkins, Baltimore, 1982)
77. Compare J. Hillis Miller, Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1958) with, for example, 'The Fiction of Realism: Sketches by Boz, Oliver Twist, and Cruikshank's Illustrations' in Charles Dickens and George Cruikshank by J. Hillis Miller and David Borowitz, with an introduction by Ada Nisbet (Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1971
78. Paul De Man has made the strongest claims of this nature. See for example his 'Criticism and Crisis' in Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism Second Edition (Methuen, 1983), pp. 3-19. There De Man asserts:

For the statement about language, that sign and meaning can never coincide, is what is precisely taken for granted in the kind of language we call literary....The self-reflecting mirror-effect by means of which a work of fiction asserts, by its very existence, its separation from empirical reality, its divergence as a sign from a meaning that depends for its existence on the constitutive activity of this sign, characterizes the work of literature in its essence. It is always against the explicit assertion of the writer that readers degrade the fiction by confusing it with a reality from which it has forever taken leave. (p. 17)

79. Colin MacCabe and Stephen Heath who studied in Paris and were instrumental in introducing avant-garde theory to British literary studies were avowed Marxists. Even though the project of writing the history of the body in language can hardly be said to be commensurate with orthodox Marxist theory, it is important to recognise that they turned towards Lacanian psychoanalysis as a way of writing history, rather than an exposition of the essential human condition.

80. Iain Wright, 'History, Hermeneutics, Deconstruction' in Criticism and Critical Theory edited by Jeremy Hawthorn (Edward Arnold, 1984), pp. 83-96 urges the employment of the work of the German hermeneutic philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer in a campaign to reinvent literary history. However, Gadamer and his philosophical father Heidegger have not written about the processes of history, Geschichte but rather of 'time', Zeit and tradition.

81. Christopher Norris, Derrida, Modern Masters Series (Fontana, 1987) argues for a philosophical rather than a literary view of Derrida, as does Rodolphe Gasche, The Tain in the Mirror: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1986). Interestingly, both Gasche and Norris are Professors of literature rather than philosophy. Henry Staten, Wittgenstein and Derrida (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1984) argues for a perception of the similarity of deconstruction with Wittgenstein's later philosophy. Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida, edited by John Sallis (University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1987) and John Llewelyn, Derrida on the Threshold of Sense, (Macmillan, 1986) deal with primarily philosophical aspects.

82. Such a personal note is the kind of 'explanation' that Derrida regards suspiciously. Christopher Norris's Derrida begins with an excerpt from a newspaper interview; 'Ah, you want me to tell you things like "I was born in El-Biar in the suburbs of Algiers in a petit-bourgeois Jewish family which was assimilated but..." Is this really necessary? I just couldn't do it, you'll have to help me.' The entire interview, translated is in Derrida and Difference edited by David Wood (University of Warwick, Parousia Press, 1985) pp. 107-27

83. Spivak, 'Glas-Piece: A compte rendu' Diacritics 7, 3 (Fall, 1977) pp. 22-43

84. Hartman, 'Crossing Over: Literary Commentary as Literature' Comparative Literature (Summer, 1976) p. 268

85. This is a reductive account of Levinas, but I am not able to explore the ramifications of his work here. Like Derrida, Levinas's texts deserve close attention, the most accessible seems to me to be Collected Philosophical Papers, translated by Alphonso Lingis (Martinus Nijhoff, Dordrecht, Boston, Lancaster, 1987)

86. Summa Theologica part 1 QQ1-XXV1, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Second Edition (Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1920) p. 28
87. See Margins translated by Alan Bass, p. 6
88. Writing and Difference translated by Alan Bass (Routledge Kegan Paul, 1978)
89. The last section of Midrash and Literature edited by Geoffrey Hartman devoted to writings by Derrida and Edmond Jabes shows how Derrida's attitudes to writing and commentary may be seen as contemporary midrash
90. Work by Richard Rorty, Henry Staten, Christopher Norris and Rodolphe Gasche, (see Bibliography) all stress the philosophical context as opposed to the literary. None of these has addressed Derrida's more literary work, such as Glas and Signesponge
91. See Derrida's 'Racism's Last Word' in Critical Inquiry 12 (1985), pp. 290-299 and subsequent debate in Critical Inquiry 13 (1985) pp. 140- 154 and pp. 155- 170 on apartheid and his 'No Apocalypse, Not now (full speed ahead, seven missiles, seven missives)' Diacritics, 20 (1984), pp. 20-31 on nuclear war. Christopher Norris, Derrida recognises the ethical and political dimensions of Derrida's work.
92. For example in 'The Law of Genre' translated by Avital Ronnell, Critical Inquiry, 1 (1980), pp. 55-81
93. See Derrida's 'Women in the Beehive' in Men in Feminism, edited by Alice Jardine and Paul Smith (Methuen, New York and London, 1987) pp. 189- 203, the work of Gayatri Spivak, for example her 'Unmaking and making in To the Lighthouse' in Contemporary Literary Criticism: Modernism Through Post-Structuralism edited by Robert Con Davies (Longman, New York and London, 1986) pp.201-215 and the work of Sarah Kofman and Helene Cixous.
94. 'Two Words for Joyce' in Post-Structuralist Joyce: Essays from the French, edited by Derek Attridge and Daniel Ferrer (CUP, Cambridge, 1984), pp. 145-159
95. 'Shibboleth' in Midrash and Literature, edited by Geoffrey Hartman and Sanford Budick (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1986) pp. 307-347
96. The poetry of Celan, an anagrammatic pseudonym of Paul Ancel or Antschel (1920-1970) is available in a selected bilingual edition Paul Celan: Poems translated by Michael Hamburger (Carcanet, Manchester, 1980) Hamburger also provides a useful introduction. The poem Derrida comments on, 'Shibboleth' is on pp. 82-83
97. See Celan's poem 'Todtnauberg' named after the place where Heidegger lived. Paul Celan: Poems pp. 241-242 and Hamburger's comment pp. 21-22

98. 'Shibboleth' in Midrash and Literature, edited by Geoffrey Hartman pp. 307-347. On the ethics of reading Heidegger, see Derrida's 'De l'epirit: Heidegger et la question' (Paris, 1987). It is sad and ironic that Derrida has to come to terms with the past of Paul De Man in a like manner after the disclosure that during the Nazi occupation of Belgium, De Man contributed certain anti-semitic articles to newspapers. See Derrida's 'Like the Sound of the Sea Deep within a Shell: Paul De Man's War' translated by Peggy Kamuf, Critical Inquiry 14, 3 (Spring 1988), pp. 590-652
99. 'Shibboleth' pp. 322-323
100. 'Différance' in Margins of Philosophy translated by Alan Bass (Harvester, Brighton, 1982), pp. 3- 27
101. See 'Some Questions and Responses' in The Linguistics of Writing edited by Nigel Fabb and others, pp. 252-264 (pp. 258-259)
102. 'Some Questions and Responses' in Fabb, pp. 258-259
103. As Christopher Norris argues it is very un-Derridean to attempt to wrench différance out of its context and explain it as a key concept. One must carefully read Derrida's paper 'Différance' and many other texts to gain an impression of what Derrida is doing. See Norris, Derrida pp. 15-17
104. 'Shibboleth' p. 322
105. Derrida's generally favourable view of formalisation in linguistics, provided it recognises the limits of its own codification is expressed in his question and answer session at the 'Linguistics of Writing' conference. See The Linguistics of Writing edited by Nigel Fabb and others, p. 252- 253
106. Of Grammatology translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1976)
107. See Critique 223 (December 1965) pp. 1017- 1042 and 224 (January 1966) pp. 23-53. The three books were: Madeleine V-David, Le debat sur les ecritures et l'hieroglyphe aux xvii et xviii siecles [1965]; Andre Leroi-Gourhan, La geste et la parole [1965] and the proceedings of a colloquium, L'ecriture et la psychologie des peuples [1963] all cited by Derrida in a note on Of Grammatology p. 323
108. I paraphrase Spivak's introduction p. lxxix here.
109. 'To my knowledge... this word has only been used by I. J. Gelb to designate the project of a modern science in A Study of Writing: The Foundations of Grammatology' (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952) footnote 4 on p. 323 of Of Grammatology
110. Spivak quoting Derrida in Writing and Difference cited in Of Grammatology p. lxxx
111. Spivak introduction p. lxxxi

112. Spivak Of Grammatology p. lxxii.
113. Derrida Positions cited by Spivak Of Grammatology p. lxxix
114. Susan Handelman 'Jacques Derrida and the Heretic Hermeneutic' in, Displacement: Derrida and After, edited by Mark Krupnick (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1981), pp. 98-129 (p. 98)
115. Michael Steig, Dickens and Phiz (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and London, 1978)
116. A Preface to Great Expectations: The Pale Usher Dusts His Lexicons in Dickens Studies Annual 2 (1972) pp. 294-335 (pp. 304-305)
117. The Clarendon edition of Great Expectations and Rosenberg's own Norton edition are still in preparation.

Chapter 2. Communication and Negative Linguistics

1. Christine Brooke-Rose, A Rhetoric of the Unreal (CUP, 1981) p.49
2. The proceedings were published as Style in Language edited by Thomas A. Sebeok, (MIT, Cambridge Mass, 1960). Jakobson's paper is found on pp. 350-377.
3. Annette Lavers, Roland Barthes: Structuralism and After, (Methuen, 1982), p. 228
4. For the logic of the parasite see J. Hillis Miller, 'The Critic as Host' in Deconstruction and Criticism (RKP, London/Seabury, New York, 1979), pp. 217-53
5. James Kearns and Ken Newton; 'An Interview with Jacques Derrida' in Literary Review 14 (1980), pp 21-22. (p. 21).
6. Derrida seems to be alluding to Jakobson's terms, to his own critique contained in La Carte postal of Lacan's seminar on Poe's 'Purloined Letter' - 'correspondence' refers to letters and the correspondence theory of truth, while 'telecommunication' includes all distant communication, including that from beyond the grave, and Freud's interest in telepathy.
7. Sebeok, p. 353
8. Sebeok, p. 353
9. Sebeok, p. 354
10. 'Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances', in Roman Jakobson: Selected Writings, 7 vols., (Mouton, 's-Gravenhage, 1962-1985) (volume 2, pp. 239-259)

11. Sebeok, p. 358

12. Sebeok, p.353

13. Jakobson's own notes and references are extraordinarily diverse. My own comments on his sources are selective in the extreme. As one would expect, Jakobson worked with considerable knowledge of philology, hermeneutics and Neo-Kantian philosophy, all of which were influential at the time he was a student. Wilhelm von Humboldt and Edmund Husserl would seem to be important general influences on Jakobson's work, but I cannot do more than indicate this here. Elmer Holenstein, Roman Jakobson's Approach to Language: Phenomenological Structuralism (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1976) is a study of Husserl's influence. Peter Steiner, Russian Formalism: a Metapoetics (Ithaca, 1984), pp. 201- 210 is informative on the psychological and philosophical basis of Russian Formalism.

14. Bühler's language theory is most conveniently found in English in Karl Bühler: Semiotic Foundations of Language Theory by Robert E. Innis, (Plenum Press, New York and London, 1982) which contains Bühler's 'Axiomatization of the Language Sciences'. Bühler's work Sprachtheorie (1934) is a major source of German linguistic philosophy and had a strong impact on Ernst Cassirer, Karl Popper and Wittgenstein.

15. See 'The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages' appendix to C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, The Meaning of Meaning (RKP, London, 1923)

16. Colin Cherry, On Human Communication (New York, 1957), Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver, The Mathematical Theory of Communication (1949)

17. Jakobson's own writings and conversations on these topics are especially informative, especially 'On a Generation that Squandered its Poets' written shortly after his friend Mayakovsky had killed himself. See Verbal Art, Verbal Sign, Verbal Time, edited by Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy (Blackwell, Oxford, 1985).

18. Language as Social Semiotic (Edward Arnold, 1978)

19. Linguistic Criticism (OUP, 1986), pp 11-12 and 72-76

20. Mary Louise Pratt, Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and London, 1977)

21. See Julia Kristeva, 'The Ruin of a Poetics' in Russian Formalism: a Collection of Articles and Texts in Translation edited by Stephen Bann and John E. Bowlt (Scottish Academic Press; Edinburgh, 1973) pp. 102-119 a translation of Kristeva's preface to the French translation of Bakhtin's Dostoevsky, (Editions de Seuil, Paris, 1970) and 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel' in Desire in Language: a Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art, edited by Leon S. Roudiez,

translated by T. Gora et al (Blackwell, Oxford, 1980) pp. 65-91 (first published Paris, 1969)

22. Pratt, p. 5

23. Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature (RKP, 1975), pp. 55-74 (p. 58).

24. Culler, pp. 63-65

25. Pratt, p. 31

26. 'Review Article: Logic, Language, and Literature: the Relevance of Frege, Oxford Literary Review 6:1 (1983) pp. 68-96 (especially p. 94)

27. Gaukroger, p.94

28. Tzvetan Todorov, Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle, translated by Wlad Godzich (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984)

29. Reproduced from Todorov, p. 54

30. Todorov, p. 54

31. W. W. Weaver, C. Shannon, M. Minsky were active in this area. See Translating and the Computer edited by B. M. Snell (North-Holland, Amsterdam, 1979)

32. Sebeok, p. 353. Todorov, p. 54

33. Todorov, p. 54

34. Todorov, p.55

35. The precise authorship of this work, together with Marxism and the Philosophy of Language attributed to V.N. Voloshinov is disputed, some scholars alleging that Bakhtin wrote all or part of them.

36. Translation of Russian original in Todorov

37. Quoted in Todorov p. 56

38. Sebeok, p. 414

39. Sebeok, p. 371

40. Sebeok, p 371

41. 'Une poétique ruinée' see Bann and Bowlt (1973) referred to on p. 281 above.

42. I am assuming simplistically here that the written version of Jakobson's paper accords with the version given orally at Indiana. The published versions of such papers are seldom mere transcripts, since one would expect the later

published version to be revised to take advantage of written rather than oral delivery, and perhaps also to deal with criticism received at the time. The 'representation' of what was said that day at Indiana is as complex as the representation of any oral forms by writing. This is one of the questions of the 'linguistics of writing' that I will take up in the following chapters on Dickens.

43. 'Wahr sind nur die Gedanken, die sich selber nicht verstehn' T. W. Adorno, Minima Morelia, quoted by Martin Jay, Adorno (Fontana, 1984) p. 11

44. Cours de linguistique générale edited by Charles Bally, Albert Sechehaye with Albert Riedlinger with notes by Tullio de Mauro (Payot; Paris, 1972), p. 27. See also Course in General Linguistics, translated and annotated by Roy Harris (Duckworth, 1983)

45. Sebeok, p. 353

46. Harris, p. 22

47. Harris, p. 29 '...writing obscures our view of the language. Writing is not a garment, but a disguise.'

48. Harris, p.25

49. Voloshinov, p.71

50. Sebeok, p. 350

51. Sebeok, p. 350

52. There is as yet no intellectual biography of Jakobson. All biographical information is taken from Pomorska and Rudy, 1985

53. Victor Erlich, Russian Formalism: History-Doctrine (Mouton, The Hague and Paris, 1969) is invaluable in describing Jakobson's role in the development of Formalism.

54. Selected Writings, vol. 7, pp. 101-112 (p. 101)

55. In an interview which prefaces Pomorska and Rudy, Jakobson introduces the program written with Jurij Tynjanov in Prague 1928 'Problems in the Study of Language and Literature'. It was written in Russian and intended as a reply to critics, but: 'This manifesto of ours remained sealed in silence in Russia for more than half a century.' (p. 16).

56. For a biography of Bakhtin see Michael Holquist and Katerina Clark Mikhail Bakhtin, (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1985) which does not, however, deal with Bakhtin's ideas critically.

57. Todorov, p.30

58. See OED.

59. Jean-François Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: a Report on Knowledge, translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester University Press, 1984) p. 16
60. Colin MacCabe, Theoretical Essays: Film, Linguistics, Literature, Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 126
61. The strangeness of such a contract in legal terms is examined by Gillian Rose, Dialectic of Nihilism: Post-Structuralism and Law, (Blackwell, Oxford, 1984), pp. 109-130 and especially p. 116
62. Lacan, Écrits p. 85
63. Deleuze and Guattari, p. 45
64. Alexandre Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit, translated Nichols (Basic Books, New York and London, 1969)
65. See Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume 1, translated by Robert Hurley (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1978), pp. 92- 103
66. Harris, p. 230
67. Felix Guattari, Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics, translated by Rosemary Sheed (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1984)
68. See Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination, p.272. Though Guattari does not attribute Bakhtin here (and thus poses the very questions of connotation and the implicit which he discusses) Bakhtin is explicitly mentioned as one of the thinkers Deleuze and Guattari draw from in their Mille Plateaux
69. Voloshinov, p. 94
70. See Mary Louise Pratt, 'Linguistic Utopias' in The Linguistics of Writing edited by Nigel Fabb, pp.48-66
71. See Gaukroger on p. 54 above
72. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Rhizome, p. 53
73. See Stuart Hall, 'Encoding/Decoding', in Culture, Media Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79, edited by Stuart Hall and others (Hutchinson, 1980) pp. 128-138
74. Foucault, History of Sexuality, p 95
75. See Lavers quoted on p. 47 above
76. See p. 37

Chapter 3. Heteroglossia and Negative Linguistics in Dickens

1. Dialogic Imagination, pp. 270-275
2. See Rabelais and His World pp. 145-195
3. Dialogic Imagination, p. 271
4. Dialogic Imagination, p. 274
5. Dialogic Imagination, p. 259
6. Dialogic Imagination, pp. 274-275
7. Dialogic Imagination, pp. 301-308
8. Dialogic Imagination, p. 300
9. Anthony Trollope, Autobiography, written 1875-6, chapter 12, quoted in Dickens: The Critical Heritage edited by Philip Collins (RKP, London, 1971) p. 326
10. Sylvere Monod, Dickens the Novelist (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1968), p 346
11. Dickens the Novelist p 347
12. Dickens the Novelist p 347
13. Sylvere Monod, Martin Chuzzlewit, Unwin Critical Library (Allen and Unwin, London, 1985)
14. Monod, Martin Chuzzlewit, pp 150-151
15. G. L. Brook, The Language of Dickens (Andre Deutsch, 1970)
16. Such work includes Norman Page, Speech in the English Novel (1973), Randolph Quirk, The Linguist and the English Language (1974) and Robert Golding's Idiolects in Dickens (1985).
17. Quirk, p 13
18. Richard Ford in an unsigned review, Quarterly Review, June 1839, 64, pp 83-102. Extracts of this long review are reprinted in Dickens: The Critical Heritage edited by Philip Collins pp 81-90 (p 83)
19. Quirk, p 36
20. For rational discussions of prescriptivism see David Crystal Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language pp. 2- 5, Colin MacCabe 'Opening Statement' in The Linguistics of Writing edited by N. Fabb, pp. 286-306. And James and Lesley Milroy, Authority in Language: Investigating Language Prescription and Standardisation (Routledge, 1985)

21. K. C. Phillipps, Language and Class in Victorian Fiction (Blackwell and Andre Deutsch, 1984)
22. A. S. C. Ross, 'Linguistic Class-Indicators in Present-Day English', Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 55 (1954), pp. 20-56 and Noblesse Oblige: An Enquiry into the Identifiable Characteristics of the English Aristocracy (Hamish Hamilton, 1956)
23. Phillipps, p. 2
24. 'Charles Dickens: Linguistic Innovator', English Studies: A Journal of English Language and Literature Vol 65, No. 3, 1984, pp 237-247 and Sørensen's later book Charles Dickens: Linguistic Innovator (Arkona, Aarhus Denmark, 1985)
25. G. N. Leech and M. H. Short, Style in Fiction, (Longman, London, 1981), p. 138
26. Sørensen, p 244
27. Sørensen, p 244, see also George H. Ford Dickens and His Readers (1955), p. 113
28. Sørensen p 247
29. Sørensen, Charles Dickens: Linguistic Innovator, p. 12
30. Sørensen, Charles Dickens: Linguistic Innovator, p. 27
31. Sørensen, Charles Dickens: Linguistic Innovator, p. 33
32. Walter Benjamin develops G. K. Chesterton's depiction of Dickens roaming the town lost in thought in his Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet of High Capitalism, translated by Harry Zohn (Verso, 1983), but both Benjamin and Chesterton underplay the extent to which Dickens observed his surroundings. See Dickens' remarks in [UT 1-2] 'I am always wandering here and there from my rooms in Covent-garden... seeing many little things, and some great things, which, because they interest me, I think may interest others.' Recent writers have questioned Dickens assumptions that he had a perfect right to go everywhere, even inside people's houses, sometimes accompanied by the police. See Kate Flint Dickens (Harvester, 1986) pp. 68-84 The Le Sage's roof-lifting demon, Asmodeus who figures in Flint's account is also central to Jonathan Arac's Commissioned Sprits (New Brunswick, 1979)
33. K. J. Fielding, 'David Copperfield and Dialect', TLS 30 April 1949, p. 288 quoted by Stanley Gerson, p. 51.
34. Patricia Ingham, 'Dialect as "Realism": Hard Times and the Industrial Novel', The Review of English Studies, Vol 37, No. 148 (November, 1986) Ingham argues that Dickens made use of Tom Bobbin: View of the Lancashire Dialect, with Glossary (1746) - Dickens owned the 1818 edition. and contrary to the view of other scholars Dickens made little direct use of

William Gaskell's Two Lectures of the Lancashire Dialect (1854) which he also possessed.

35. Gerson p. 369 citing Letters 2, 31.

36. Letter to Mark Lemon 20 February 1854

37. Unsigned notice, 'Charles Dickens', British Medical Journal, 18 June 1870, 1, p 636, reprinted in Dickens: The Critical Heritage, edited by Philip Collins, p 514

38. In Fundamentals of Language, edited by Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle (Mouton, The Hague, 1956. For an introduction to aphasia see David Crystal The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language (CUP, Cambridge, 1987), pp.270 - 271 and Crystal's suggested further reading which includes R. Lesser, Linguistic Investigations of Aphasia (Edward Arnold, 1978). Jakobson's analysis has been both extended and challenged as a model of language disturbance due to brain damage.

39. See Bakhtin Dialogic Imagination pp 262-263

40. For 'Images of language' see Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination, p. 416, the phrase 'language in its concrete living totality' is used in Bakhtin, Dostoevsky, p. 181

41. Mamie Dickens, My Father As I Recall Him (1897) pp. 46-65 extracted in Dickens: Interviews and Recollections edited by Philip Collins, Volume 1, pp. 121- 123

42. For a theoretical understanding of mirrors in a Lacanian perspective see Jacqueline Rose, Sexuality in the Field of Vision (Verso, 1986), especially pp.167-197

43. Derrida deconstructs the logic of the mime in Dissemination translated by Barbara Johnson (Athlone Press, 1981)

44. J. C. Wells Accents of English 3 volumes (CUP, Cambridge, 1982) volume 2, pp. 332-333.

45. Foucault, 'Orders of Discourse' p 8.

46. See Foucault, History of Sexuality p 135.

47. Terry Eagleton, 'Wittgenstein's Friends' in New Left Review 135 (1982), p 78

48. Karl Marx, 'The German Ideology' in, The Marx-Engles Reader, edited by Robert C. Tucker, Second Edition (Norton, New York, 1978), pp.146- 200 (p. 154)

49. Stanley Gerson, Sound and Symbol in the Dialogue of the Works of Charles Dickens (Almqvist and Wiksell; Stockholm, 1967) see also Gerson's 'I spells it with a "v"' The Dickensian volume 62 (1966), pp. 138-146. Gerson argues that there was a 'confusion' between 'w' and 'v' and that Jespersen was wrong to postulate an intermediate sound.

50. See Gerson, pp. 259- 276
51. Gerson, p. 265
52. See p. 37 above
53. Walker's Critical Pronouncing Dictionary (1841) p. 16.
See also W. H. Savage, The Vulgarisms and Improprieties of the English Language (Printed by T. S. Porter, London, 1833) p. 6
54. Henry Sweet, History of English Sounds [1888], cited by Gerson, p. 264
55. Raymond Chapman, The Treatment of Sounds in Language and Literature (Blackwell, 1984) pp 66-67
56. Chapman, pp. 65-66
57. Chapman, p 66
58. Morning Star, 6 January 1869, cited in Charles Dickens: The Public Readings edited by Philip Collins, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975) p. 169
59. Otto Jespersen, A Modern English Grammar: On Historical Principles 7 Volumes (Allen and Unwin; Heidelberg, London, Copenhagen, 1922-49), volume 1, pp. 385-386.
60. Jespersen pp. 385-386
61. Gerson, '"I spells it with a 'v'""
62. Charles Dickens: The Public Readings edited by Philip Collins, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975) p. 169
63. Kabbalah and Criticism (Seabury Press, New York, 1975), p. 23
64. Samuel Beckett, 'Dante... Bruno. Vico.. Joyce' in Our Exagmination Round His Factification For Incamination of Work in Progress (Faber, London, 1972), pp. 3- 22 (p. 14) (first published 1929 Beckett's emphasis)
65. Beckett, p. 15
66. pp. 40- 51 of The Uncommercial Traveller
67. Bracebridge Hemyng in a contribution to Henry Mayhew's London Labour and the London Poor (1852), Volume 4, pp. 227-230 describes a similar expedition, again under police protection, but in London. Hemyng comments on the skill and decorum of the dancing and mentions that there were 'coloured men' and 'a few thorough negroes' in the dance-hall
68. Kate Flint Dickens pp.35-36 discusses Dickens' habit of accompanying the police on their surveillance, both they and their literary guest never questioning their right to enter any lodging house at will whatever the day or night.

69. Dickens' attitude to black people varied considerably and was often contradictory. His views on American slavery contrast starkly with an essay 'The Noble Savage' in Household Words 168, June 11 1853, pp. 337-339 which was influenced by Carlyle's racist pamphlet 'The Nigger Question'. See Michael Goldberg, Carlyle and Dickens (University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1972), pp. 144-150 and Gertrude Himmelfarb, The Idea of Poverty: England in the Early Industrial Age (Faber, 1984), p. 475
70. For a discussion of différance and Shibboleth see above p. 37
71. For a post-structuralist approach to colonial discourse see Benita Parry 'Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse' Oxford Literary Review 9, 1-2 (1987), pp. 27-58
72. Forster, ed Ley, p.28
73. Brook, The Language of Dickens, p 107.
74. Le Vertige du déplacement (Fayard, Paris, 1974)
75. See Introduction [PP lxiv] and Butt and Tillotson, p. 71
76. [DS 16 footnote 3]
77. Dickens: Interviews and Recollections, edited by Philip Collins, Volume 1, (Macmillan, 1981), pp. 5-8. For a brief consideration of backslang and gibberish see David Crystal, The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language p. 59
78. See p. 17 of this study and Bakhtin's Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, pp. 181-251
79. See Mayhew, London Labour and the London Poor, Vol 2, p 465- 507. Mayhew comments 'We can scarcely walk along a street of any extent, or pass through a square of the least pretensions to "gentility," without meeting one or more of these private scavengers.' p.465 One who Mayhew calls the 'aristocratic' sweeper, regularly worked in Cavendish Square, where he was given money by the Duke of Portland and Lord George Bentinck, among others. The sweeper had particular affection for Lady Mildmay, an old lady who knows his name, shakes hands with him, and gives him a Christmas tip. (p 469). Working as a crossing-sweeper, then could promote conversations, of a sort, across class boundaries.
80. George Ford and Sylvere Monod, Bleak House, Norton Critical Editions (Norton, New York, London, 1977) p 201 explain as follows: I am fly (in effect) 'I know what you want'; Fen larks 'No tricks allowed'; Stow hooking it! 'Don't try running away.' OED records fly as slang, meaning 'knowing, wide-awake, sharp.' The earliest use recorded dates from 1811, Henry Mayhew (1851) is cited: 'We're rather "fly to a dodge."' This line from Great Expectations is then cited with a date of 1851. Fen also appears in the OED as slang, thought to be a corruption of 'fend': 'to forbid'. It only appears in expressions such as 'Fen larks': 'a

prohibitory exclamation used chiefly by boys at marbles' Jo's words here in Great Expectations are cited as the example of usage. Stow is described by the OED as obsolete slang, meaning 'to desist from', while cut has the meaning here of 'to run'.

81. Compare Old Bill Barley's refrain of 'Bless your eyes' in which Pip substitutes good wishes for something quite the reverse.[GE 357]

82. 'When he was very loud, I use capitals.' [UT 46]

83. Eric Partridge Origins makes the point that the Latin satis 'enough' and the English sad are cognate, there are various Slavonic, Sanskrit and Greek cognates which are derived from Indo-European roots. (The Middle English sad meant 'sated' 'tired' 'satisfied'. See Origins p 580 under headword 'Sad'.

84. See Norman Page, 'A Language Fit for Heroes', The Dickensian, 65 (1969), pp. 100-107 on this point. Page argues that, in fact, Lizzie Hexam language does show a degree of development that may be read as a concession to social realism.

85. On Joe's exchanges with Miss Havisham see Dorothy Van Ghent, 'On Great Expectations' in The English Novel: Form and Function (Rinehart, New York, 1953), pp 125-138 which argues that Joe's replies have not 'the remotest relation to the questions' put to him by Miss Havisham. Ruth M. Vande Kieft, 'Patterns of Communication in Great Expectations' in Nineteenth Century Fiction Vol XV No. 4 (March 1961) pp 325-334 which argues that Van Ghent projected a modernist obsession with non-communication and alienation on to the novel. While George Levine 'Communication in Great Expectations' in Nineteenth Century Fiction Vol XV111 No. 2 (September, 1963) pp 175-181 argues that Kieft overstated the case, there is a barrier between the strong and the weak, there is no possibility of communication between rich and poor and that Joe instinctively understands this.

86. Investigations paragraph 242

87. The verbal fencing in the interview between Lightwood, Wrayburn and Rogue Riderhood in Our Mutual Friend is a good example [OMF 149-157]. However that novel seems to mark a new departure for Dickens since the identity of Harmon, Rokesmith and 'Our Mutual Friend' is made blindingly obvious early in the novel. 'When I devised this story, I foresaw the likelihood that a class of readers and commentators would suppose that I was at great pains to conceal exactly what I was at great pains to suggest: namely, that Mr. John Harmon was not slain, and that Mr. John Rokesmith was he.' [Postscript OMF 821] In Our Mutual Friend Dickens was able to dissolve the mystery convention he had previously often employed in his plots, the identity of Ester Summerson, of Oliver Twist and the source of Pip's expectations, for example.

88. Bulstrode and Ladislaw in George Eliot's Middlemarch are further examples
89. Dialogic Imagination p. 308
90. Dialogic Imagination p. 301
91. Dialogic Imagination, pp. 301-302
92. Dialogic Imagination, p. 302
93. There is a transcription error in this passage in the English translation of Dialogic Imagination, which has "whole-wide" instead of "world-wide" in the emphasised clause. See Dialogic Imagination, p. 303
94. Dialogic Imagination, p. 303
95. Dialogical Imagination, p. 303
96. Dialogic Imagination, p. 301
97. Dialogic Imagination, p. 305
98. See Problems of Doestoevsky's Poetics, p. 181
99. Cited in Dialogic Imagination, p. 305. (The quotation in Dialogic Imagination omits the comma after "But".
100. Dialogic Imagination, p. 305
101. Di logic Imagination, p. 305
102. Dialogic Imagination, p. 301
103. See the Glossary of Thieves' Cant and Slang [OT 401] of Clarendon Edition
104. Pierce Egan, Life in London: or the Day and Night scenes of Jerry Hawthorn, Esq. and his Elegant Friend, Corinthian Tom in their Rambles and Sprees through the Metropolis (Hotten, 1869), first published 1821.
105. See Language as Social Semiotic: the Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning (Edward Arnold, 1978), pp. 164-182
106. See for example the work of William Labov, 'The Study of Language in its Social Context' Studium Generale 23 (1970)
107. See Philip Collins, Dickens and Crime, pp. 201-202. Dickens seems to have had a low opinion of the Bow Street Officers, but unbounded admiration for the new detective police force. Inspector Bucket in Great Expectations does not speak in cant.
108. Brook p. 109
109. Brook, p. 114

110. Dialogic Imagination, p. 304
111. Unsigned essay, 'Advice to an Intending Serialist', Blackwood's Magazine, November 1846, lx, pp 590-605, extracted and attributed to W. E. Aytoun in Dickens: The Critical Heritage edited by Philip Collins, pp 207-211 (p 211). Aytoun's list of names is composed of Dickensian elements combined with pure invention, like genuine Dickensian names the list obeys the permissible order of sound combination in English and may be divided into meaningful sub-units. Aytoun clearly understood how Dickens' names were formed
112. Collins, Dickens: The Critical Heritage p 210
113. For delire see Jean-Jacques Lecercle, Philosophy through the Looking-Glass (Hutchinson, 1985) pp 1-13
114. See 'Nurse's Stories in The Uncommercial Traveller
115. Lindley Murray, English Grammar: Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners, 37th edition, (Printed by Thomas Wilson & Sons, York for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green; and for Harvey and Darton, London; and for Wilson and Sons, York, 1824 first published York, 1795) uses Latin examples to explain the concept of case, but admits that English uses prepositions rather than inflexions, after some debate he admits the use of an objective (to include the accusative) in English. p 54
116. Among the attractions at Jarley's wax-works is the face and costume of Grimaldi the clown altered 'to represent Mr. Lindley Murray as he appeared when engaged in the composition of his English Grammar.' [OCS 216]
117. Murray, Grammar p 153
118. Fowler's Modern English Usage (1st edition 1926, revised 1965) still regards It's me as a 'piece of false grammar which, though often heard, is not sanctioned.' p 258
119. Lindley Murray, English Grammar: Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners, 37th edition, (Printed by Thomas Wilson & Sons, York for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green; and for Harvey and Darton, London; and for Wilson and Sons, York, 1824 first published York, 1795), p 44
120. Lindley Murray, Grammar p 44
121. Other references to grammar in Dickens include Mark Tapley's remarks [MC 729-730]
- '... a Werb is a word as signifies to be, to do, or to suffer (which is all the grammar, and enough too, as ever I was taught): and if there's a Werb alive, I'm it. For I'm always a bein, sometimes doin, and continually a sufferin.'

And Tom Gradgrind's declension of 'Verb neuter, not to care'
[HT 134]

122. Lindley Murray, Grammar p 275

123. Lindley Murray, Grammar p 292

124. Lindley Murray, English Exercises: Adapted to Murray's English Grammar, 31st edition (Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, London, 1824), (first published 1795).

125. Lindley Murray Exercises p 34

126. A far more benign and enlightened use of Lindley Murray may be found in chapter 24 of George Eliot's Middlemarch (1871-2) where the dexterous Mrs Garth teaches her son as she makes pastry. For another Dickensian example see 'Mr. Minns and his Cousin' in Sketches by Boz [SB 319] where a 'smirking man with red whiskers' questions Master Alexander Budden on the meaning of be, which young Alick understands as bee. His patronising questioner then makes a joke about the boy not understanding proper names (his mother calls him Alick, rather than Alexander.)

127. See Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, translated by Alan Sheridan (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1977) pp 184-194. In Foucauldian terms the examination enables the teacher to transmit her knowledge to the pupil, while at the same time transforming her pupil's discourse into an object of knowledge. Success for Miss Peecher would be measured by Mary Anne's ability to internalise the grammatical rules, so that her discourse does not deviate from the norm. Another type of examination found in Dickens is the object lesson, for example when Bitzer defines a horse for Mr Gradgrind as 'Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive....' [HT 5]. Philip Collins in Dickens and Education comments that the component that Dickens has omitted from this examination is the etymological. Lindley Murray terms the kind of analysis that Mary Anne performs 'etymological parsing'.

128. See p. 97 above

Chapter 4. Names and Name-Calling in Dickens

1. Guattari, Molecular Revolution quoted on p. 67 above

2. Stanley Gerson, 'Name-Creation in Dickens', Moderna Språk 69, 4 (1975), pp. 299-315

3. Steven Connor, Charles Dickens pp. 150-152

4. Connor, p. 150

5. See Stanley Gerson, 'Name-Creation in Dickens' cited above, and Harry Stone, 'What's in a Name: Fantasy and Calculation in Dickens' Dickens Studies Annual 14 (AMS Press, New York, 1985), pp. 191 - 204, which draws upon Stone's facsimile edition of Dickens' working notes. Dickens' Working Notes for His Novels, edited with an introduction by Harry Stone (University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1987)
6. For a brief linguistic consideration see David Crystal, Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language pp.112-113. Lacan's difficult 'The Function and Field of speech and language in Psychoanalysis', Ecrits, pp.30-113, together with other essays is rewarding since it questions the functions of language that we take for granted in order to communicate.
7. Lacan, 'On the Possible Treatment of Psychosis' in Ecrits p. 199
8. Kafka's short story 'Before the Law' illuminates the connection between the Father, the Law and negation.
9. John Lyons Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics (CUP, 1968) p. 337
10. For an introduction to the philosophical debate on proper names see Ruth Kempson, Semantic Theory (CUP, 1977) pp. 12-14. Important contributions include Bertrand Russell 'On Denoting', Mind 14, (1902) pp. 479-93, John Searle, Speech Acts, (CUP, 1969) (see especially Chapter 7) plus the work of Frege, Dummett and Kripke; see Kempson p 21 for further information. Alan Gardiner, The Theory of Proper Names: A Controversial Essay, 2nd edition (OUP, London, 1957, first published 1940) is still interesting. Gardiner points out that the term 'proper name' derives from the Greek, where it means 'a genuine name or a name more genuine than other names'.
11. In The Kristeva Reader edited by Toril Moi (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986) pp 216- 237
12. Kristeva 'The True/Real' p. 235
13. Kristeva, 'The True/Real' p. 235
14. Kristeva's semiotic is inspired by Bakhtin's polyphony and Freud's theory of drives. It is elaborated in the first part of her Revolution in Poetic Language, translated by Margaret Waller, (Columbia, New York, 1984).
15. Gregory Ulmer, Applied Grammatology: Post(e)- Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore & London, 1985), p. 19
16. 'Limited Inc abc', Glyph 2 (1977), pp. 162-254
17. 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences' in, Writing and Difference translate by Alan Bass (Routledge, 1978) pp. 278 -292

18. Jacques Derrida, Signéponge/Signsponge, with translation by Richard Rand (Columbia University Press, New York, 1984)
19. The translator of Signsponge, Richard Rand has attempted readings of Keats' 'Ode to Autumn' and Coleridge's 'Christobel' see Richard A. Rand 'Geraldine' in, Untying the Text: a Post-Structuralist Reader, edited by Robert Young (Routledge, Boston & London, 1981) pp. 280-316
20. Gregory Ulmer in Applied Grammatology, pp. 19-22 provides a fuller commentary to which I am indebted
21. 'Two Words for Joyce', in Post-structuralist Joyce: Essays from the French, edited by Derek Attridge and Daniel Ferrer (CUP, 1984) pp. 145-159
22. Hartman, Saving the Text, p 46
23. See Freud, Standard Edition, VI, pp. 269-270
24. See Freud, Standard Edition, XV, pp. 36-37 and 53-54
25. Stanley Gerson, 'Name-Creation in Dickens', p. 308
26. Geoffrey Hartman, Saving the Text: Literature, Derrida, Philosophy, (John Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore, 1981) p 62
27. See Dianne. F. Sadoff Monsters of Affection: Dickens, Eliot and Bronte on Fatherhood (John Hopkins, Baltimore & London, 1982) especially pp 1- 51 for a working out of the 'family romance' in Dickens. While Sadoff does observe that roman may mean simply 'novel' her Freud is not so implicated in literature as, for example, Peter Brooks', hence her work, though valuable lacks the dimension of textuality, the realisation that psychoanalysis too is a kind of writing found in Brooks' Reading for the Plot.
28. See Freud Standard Edition 1X, pp. 235-241
29. Alexander Walsh, From Copyright to Copperfield: the Identity of Dickens (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. & London, 1987)
30. Freud, Standard Edition 1X p. 238
31. According to Alexander Walsh, From Copyright to Copperfield p. 168
32. Freud, Standard Edition 1X, p 238
33. Freud, Standard Edition 1X, p. 241
34. See preface to the English translation in Standard Edition 1X
35. Freud, Standard Edition 1X, p. 238
36. See, for example, Carolyn Brown, 'Great Expectations: Masculinity and Modernity' in, English and Cultural Studies:

Broadening the Context, edited by Michael Green with Richard Hoggart (John Murray, 1987), pp. 60-74 (especially p. 61)

37. Peter Brooks, 'Repetition, Repression, and Return: Great Expectations and the Study of Plot', New Literary History 11, 3, (1980), pp. 503 -526 (p. 524)

38. Hartman, Saving the Text, p. 126. Hartman does not give any exact reference to Freud here, but one may assume he refers to Totem and Taboo, the power of the mythical father there seems to be one of the components of Lacan's nom-du-pere which exploits the ambiguity of spoken French to mean 'the name of the father' and 'the No of the father.'

39. In Our Mutual Friend, John Harmon alias Rokesmith is shocked to hear that the Boffins intend to adopt a child and give it his own name [OMF 101 & 111]

40. Jeremy Tambling, 'Prison-Bound: Dickens and Foucault' in Essays in Criticism vol 36 No. 1 (1986) pp 11- 31. This is an interesting account of the novel in Foucauldian terms, and suggestive in its account of how questions of language and control pervade Great Expectations. However, to my mind, Tambling neglects the stress Foucault placed on power as a necessary and indeed positive force.

41. Tambling, 'Prison-Bound' p. 22

42. See Freud, 'The Uncanny' Standard Edition XV11, pp. 217-252

43. Freud, Standard Edition XX1, p. 91

44. Graham Martin, Great Expectations p 19

45. See Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)' in Essays on Ideology (Verso, London, 1984) pp. 1- 60, especially pp. 44-51

46. Emile Benveniste, Problemes de Linguistique Generale (Gallimard, Paris, 1966)

47. Roman Jakobson, 'Shifters, Verbal Categories, and the Russian Verb' in Selected Writings, Volume 2 (Mouton, The Hague & Paris, 1971), pp. 130-147

48. In Victorian times, and indeed until comparatively recently married women were formally addressed in writing by their husband's christian and surname.

49. Unsigned review, Macphail's Edinburgh Ecclesiastical Journal, January 1849, V1, pp 423-31 reprinted in Dickens: The Critical Heritage, edited Philip Collins (RKP, London, 1971) pp. 179-181 (p 179)

50. Stanley Gerson, 'Name-Creation in Dickens' p. 314

51. Cited by Stanley Gerson, 'Name-Creation in Dickens', p. 303
52. 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' in Essays on Ideology (Verso, 1984), pp. 2-60 especially pp. 44-51
53. See 'Received, a Blank Child', Household Words 19 March 1853, reprinted in The Uncollected Writings of Charles Dickens: Household Words 1850-1859, edited by Harry Stone, volume 2 (Allan Lane, 1968) pp. 455-465 There Dickens describes the history and workings of the London Foundling Hospital, which was founded by a Thomas Coram, Dickens also describes the problems of arriving at names for the children. Naming of foundlings was evidently a problem, Dickens explains how at one time the children were named after the governors of the Hospital, until some of the foundlings, having grown up, claimed kinship with them. Children used to be named after famous persons, or fictional characters, but the present treasurer issued lists based on the London Post Office Directory. (p. 462)
54. Oxford English Dictionary defines tat as 'a rag, to gather rags, to tangle or make matted' The only entry for tatty is as an attribute of hair, 'tangled, matted'. tatterdemalion is 'a person in tattered clothing, a ragged or beggarly fellow; a ragamuffin. While tatting is defined as a kind of knotted lace 'origin unknown, perhaps an arbitrary formation'
55. Kate Flint, Dickens, (Harvester Press, Brighton, 1986) p. 113 and p. 131- 133,. Mr Pancks asserts that Miss Wade herself does not know who her parents were. This lack of secure origin adds to her disruption of family norms. See [LD 540] and Kate Flint, p. 69
56. Virginia Blain, 'Double Vision and the Double Standard in Bleak House: a Feminist Perspective', Literature and History Vol 2, number 1 (Spring, 1985), pp 31- 46 (p. 40 and note 25 on p. 45)
57. Geoffrey Hartman, Saving the Text: Literature, Derrida, Philosophy (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1981) p. 128
58. Kate Flint, Dickens p. 113 groups Miss Wade with Rosa Dartle and Estella as disruptive women characters whose sexuality destabilises patriarchy.
59. Dickens' Sketches By Boz is cited by Oxford English Dictionary: 'He got out of bed... to half-baptize a washerwoman's child in a slop-basin.' and the present line of Oliver Twist. The Book of Common Prayer counselled that persons should be baptised in public where ever possible, and the Oxford English Dictionary also indicates that 'half-baptised' could be used to indicate persons supposed to be 'semi-barbarous' or (in dialect) 'deficient in intelligence'.
60. For discussion of the alphabet as a device to order words, generate characters and narrative see Brian McHale,

Post Modernist Fiction, (Methuen, New York and London, 1987)
pp 156-159

61. Christmas Stories pp 1-18 (pp 6-7)

62. There are similar lists of politicians in Bleak House, the effect of which is to indicate that all politicians are so alike, that each could be substituted for the other without loss. [BH 160-161], see also G. L. Brook, The Language of Dickens, pp. 211-212 for discussion of this device.

63. The first group of names forms part of Slip 4 recto, the single name 'Martin Chuzzlewit' is found on Slip 4 verso, and the final group are found on part of Slip 5. See 'Appendix A: Preliminaries and Number Plans' in the Clarendon edition edited by Margaret Cardwell pp 823- 826 (pp 834) and the facsimiles of the manuscript in Dickens' Working Notes for His Novels edited by Harry Stone, pp. 26- 31

64. See Forster, Life, pp. 747 -760

65. Facsimiles of the working notes can be found in Dickens' Working Notes for His Novels, edited by Harry Stone, pp. 138-139

66. Stanley Gerson, 'Name-Creation in Dickens' p. 301. One might augment Gerson's list by Sampson Brass and Dr. Marigold.

67. F. R. and Q. D. Leavis Dickens the Novelist, (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1972) footnote 12 on p 73

68. For facsimile see Dickens' Working Notes for His Novels, edited by Harry Stone, pp. 156 -157

69. Letter to Mrs Hill reproduced in K. J. Fielding, 'The Making of David Copperfield', The Listener, 19 July 1951, pp. 93-4 cited in [DC xli] The Clarendon Edition of David Copperfield, edited by Nina Burgess. See also Dickens at Work, p 141-142 and Selected Letters, edited Paroissien pp 330-331.

70. See Oxford English Dictionary under claypole

71. Genesis 9, 21

72. For Noah's wife see Lisa Jardine, Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare (Harvester, Brighton, 1983) note 8, p. 134.

73. See the glossary of thieves' cant and slang [OT 403]

74. Carolyn Brown, 'Great Expectations: Masculinity and Modernity' p. 64

75. 'Gone Astray' in Household Words, vol. 7, 177 (August 13, 1853), pp. 553-557 For analysis and background information

on the article see John Greaves, 'Going Astray', Dickens Studies Annual, Volume 3 (1980), pp. 144-161

76. 'Gone Astray' p. 556

Chapter 5. Literacy and Writing

1. Barbara Johnson, 'Rigorous Unreliability' in The Lesson of Paul de Man Yale French Studies, 69 (1985), pp 73-80 (p. 74)

2. Jameson, The Political Unconscious, p. 18

3. Dickens often marks the bodies of female characters, Esther Summerson's smallpox scars, Rosa Dartle's facial scar caused by Steerforth's blow and Jagger's housekeeper's mutilated wrists, the legacy of a suicide attempt, all are centrally concerned with the plot and may be read as marks of transgressive female sexuality, unacceptable to the masculine values of the novels.

4. Dorothy van Ghent, 'The Dickens World: a View from Todgers's', Swanee Review 58 (1950)

5. Mamie Dickens, My Father As I Recall Him [1897] pp. 46-65, quoted in Dickens: Interviews and Recollections edited by Philip Collins, volume 1 (1981), p. 123. However the Dickens House Museum, while it exhibits several quill pens said to be his, also displays a few of the newer steel dip pens and nibs.

6. Letter, cited in Forster's Life p. 734

7. Letter, 18 April 1853, cited in Harry Stone, Dickens' Working Notes for His Novels (University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1987), p. 183

8. See Steven Marcus, 'Language into Structure: Pickwick Revisited', Daedalus vol 101 (1972) pp 183-202; Max Byrd, 'Reading in Great Expectations', PMLA 91 (1976) pp 259-265; Alexander Welsh 'Blackmail Studies in Martin Chuzzlewit and Bleak House', Dickens Studies Annual, edited by Michael Timko, Fred Kaplan and Edward Guiliano, AMS Press, Vol 11 (1983) pp 25-35 and the essays by Robert Treacy and Murrey Baumgarten in that volume. Alexander Welsh, 'Writing and Copying in the age of Steam' in Victorian Literature and Society: Essays Presented to Richard D. Altick, edited by James R. Kincaid and Albert J. Kuhn (Ohio State Univ Press; Ohio, 1984), pp 30-45; Robert S. Baker, 'Imagination and Literacy in Dickens' Our Mutual Friend' Criticism vol 18:1 (1976) pp 57-72; and Murrey Baumgarten 'Writing the Revolution', DSA, 12 (1983) pp 161-176, which deals with A Tale of Two Cities

9. DSA, 11 (1983) pp 37-59

10. Treacy, pp. 37-38

11. Essay on the Origin of Languages translated by J. H Moran (New York: Fredrick Ungar, (1966), p 21. Cited by Treacy p 38
12. Treacy (1983) p 44
13. DSA, 11 (1983) pp 61- 72
14. Baumgarten (1983) p 62
15. 'The difficulty of reading' Diogenes, 28 (1959), p. 17
16. Baumgarten (1983) p 67
17. 'Writing and David Copperfield', DSA, 14 (1985)
18. in Literacy in Traditional Societies edited by Jack Goody (CUP, 1968)
19. Baumgarten, 'Writing and David Copperfield' p. 57
20. Franco Moretti, Signs Taken For Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms, translated by Susan Fischer and others, (Verso, 1983), p. 19
21. Rene Balibar, Les Français fictifs: le rapport des styles littéraires au français national (Hachette; Paris, 1974), see also Etienne Balibar and Pierre Machery, 'On Literature as an Ideological Form', in Untying the Text, edited by Robert Young, pp. 79- 99
22. Colin MacCabe 'Opening Statement: Theory and Practice' in The Linguistics of Writing: Arguments between Language and Literature, edited by Nigel Fabb and others, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1987), p. 292. MacCabe refers to the original Dickensian epigraph of 'The Waste Land' - 'He do the police in different voices' as evidence of the depth of this crisis.
23. The Warden, Chapter 4 (OUP, 1980), pp 43-54
24. Henry James, The Turn of the Screw and Other Stories (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1969), pp. 19-20 and p. 86
25. 'Language into Structure: Pickwick Revisited', Daedalus, Vol 101 (1972), pp. 183-202
26. 'Dimensions of Illiteracy, 1750-1850' in Explorations in Economic History vol 10 (1973) pp 437-454
27. See however: Michael Sanderson, 'Literacy and Social Mobility in the Industrial Revolution in England' Past and Present, 56 (1972) pp 75-104. Harvey J. Graff The Literacy Myth: Literacy and Social Structure in the Nineteenth-Century City (Academic Press: New York, San Francisco, London, 1979) This is a study of three Canadian cities, but digests much valuable information in the course of its polemic.

28. See Lawrence Stone, 'Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900', Past and Present 42 (1969) pp 69- 139 (p 102) and R. S. Schofield, 'Dimensions of Illiteracy' p 441
29. Stone, p 98
30. Stone p 119
31. Stone, table vi p 122 'Geographical Distribution of Adult Male Literacy in 1840 based on 'Report of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages for 1840, (1841). p12 (North and East of London = Herts, Bucks, Hunts, Beds, Cambs, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk; while Extreme North = Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmoreland.)
32. Schofield, p 437
33. 'Introduction', The Changing World of Charles Dickens, edited by Robert Giddings (Vision and Barnes and Noble, 1983), pp. 7-19 (p. 12).
34. James, Fiction, p. 10
35. Louis James, Fiction for the Working Man 1830 - 1850 (OUP, 1963) p.10
36. Louis James, Fiction p. 10
37. Raymond Williams Communications p 15
38. See Household Words 16 April 1853, in, The Uncollected Writings of Charles Dickens: Household Words 1850 -1859, edited by Harry Stone, volume 2 (Allan Lane, 1968) pp. 467-475. Henry Morley assisted Dickens with the editing of Household Words, there is a brief biography of him in Stone, volume 2, p. 656
39. Uncollected Writings, edited by Harry Stone, volume 1, pp. 192-193
40. Pictures From Italy, with an introduction and notes by David Paroissien (Andre Deutsch, 1973), p. 218
41. Tony Weller has a letter written for him in The Pickwick Papers, while Wopsle reads the newspaper aloud in Great Expectations. Biddy writes a letter to Pip from Joe also in Great Expectations
42. Jack Goody, The Domestication of the Savage Mind (CUP, Cambridge, 1977) and W. J. Ong, Orality and Literacy (Methuen, 1982)
43. For example see The Social History of Language, edited by Peter Burke and Roy Porter (1987)
44. Brian V. Street, Literacy in Theory and Practice (CUP; Cambridge and London, 1984) and Harvey J. Graff The Literacy Myth: Literacy and Social Structure in the Nineteenth-Century City (Academic Press: New York, San Francisco, London, 1979)

45. Exceptions are Pumblechook's mental arithmetic problems inflicted upon Pip in Great Expectations and Micawber's famous cash balance between happiness and misery [DC 150]

46. See Geoffrey Hartman, Saving the Text (John Hopkins; Baltimore, 1981) especially the final chapter 'Words and Wounds' for an analysis of language as hurting and healing.

47. 'The Metropolitan Protectives' written with W.H. Wills, Household Words 26 April 1851, in, Uncollected Writings edited by Harry Stone, volume 1, pp. 253- 273 (p. 271).

48. 'Valentine's Day at the Post Office' Household Words 30 March 1850, in Harry Stone, Uncollected Writings, volume 1, pp. 69-84 (p. 78)

49. 'Received a Blank Child' written with W. H. Wills, Household Words, 19 March 1853, collected in Uncollected Writings, edited by Harry Stone, volume 2, pp. 455-465. Stone comments that the Foundling Hospital is mentioned in 'The Boarding House', Barnaby Rudge, Little Dorrit (Tattycoram is a foundling originating from there) and 'No Throughfare'.

50. See The Uncommercial Traveller, pp 413- 425

51. 'A Plated Article' in The Uncommercial Traveller pp 550-559 and 'A Paper-Mill' Household Words 31 August 1850, reprinted in The Uncollected Writings of Charles Dickens; Household Words 1850- 1859 Vol 1, edited by Harry Stone (Allen Lane:London,1969) pp 137- 142

52. This move from victim to agent is characteristic of Dickens. Thus in Great Expectations, Pip subject to Miss Havisham's whims has a hallucination in which she appears to be hung. The better Freudian commentators, Steven Marcus and Peter Brooks, develop many instances of Dickens using aggression as a defence. See Steven Marcus Dickens: From Pickwick to Dombey(1965) and Peter Brooks Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention In Narrative (1984). All Freudian treatments of Dickens are indebted to Edmund Wilson's 'Dickens: The Two Scrooges', The Wound and the Bow (1941). For 'aggression' and 'defence' see The Language of Psychoanalysis by J. Laplanche and J-B. Pontalis (1973).

53. There is an acrostic on 'Warren' in The Old Curiosity Shop [OCS 213] while in Great Expectations, Joe and Wopsle go straight to visit the 'Blacking Ware'us' when they arrive in London and which they find is 'drawed too architectooralooral' on its red advertising bills. [GE 210]

54. Dickens began Barnaby Rudge, after stating that the year is 1775, with a description of the Maypole Inn and its sign, 'a fair young ash' which 'demonstrated to all ... travellers as could neither read nor write (and at that time a vast number both of travellers and stay-at-homes were in this condition).' [BR 1]

55. The phrase 'Quick, thy tablets, memory' is the refrain of Matthew Arnold's poem 'A Memory Picture' which was published two years before the present 'Bill-Sticking' article in 1849. It may be an allusion to 'My Tables' Hamlet 1. v. 107

56. This suggests the degree of involvement of illiterates in a developing literate society, a phenomenon attested by Keith Thomas and Lawrence Stone

57. Bert G. Hornback in 'The Other Portion of Bleak House' in The Changing World of Charles Dickens, edited by Robert Giddings (Vision & Barnes & Noble, 1983) pp 180 - 195 somewhat perversely rejects the idea that Esther is referring to the pages written by the omniscient narrator, he argues that the novel is unfinished, Esther breaking off in mid-sentence and the third person narrator disappearing with Mr George, the reader being left to provide a conclusion, to write the other portion as Esther's 'unknown friend.'

58. See Forster, The Life of Charles Dickens pp. 559- 565. Forster is here repeating the criticisms he made in a generally favourable unsigned review of the novel in The Examiner, 8 October 1853, pp. 643-645, extracted in Dickens: The Critical Heritage edited by Philip Collins, pp. 290- 297

59. Forster p. 559

60. 'Double Vision and the Double Standard in Bleak House: a Feminist Perspective, Literature and History Vol 11:1 (Spring, 1985), pp 31-46

61. Blain, 1985 p 31.

62. Bleak House, (London, 1974) pp 12-13

63. On the dual narration of the novel see: William Axton, 'The Trouble with Esther' Modern Language Quarterly, vol. 26 (1965; Q. D. Leavis, Dickens the Novelist (London, 1970) p 155; Alex Zwerdling, 'Esther Summerson Rehabilitated' PMLA, 88 (1973), pp 429-439; Lawrence Frank, '"Through a Glass Darkly": Esther Summerson and Bleak House, DSA 4 (1975), pp 91-112; and Carol A. Senf 'Bleak House, Dickens, Esther, and the Androgynous Mind', The Victorian Newsletter, 64, (Fall 1983), pp 21-27

64. Blain (1985) p 31

65. Taylor Stoehr, The Dreamer's Stance (Cornell; New York, 1965) p 149.

66. Blain (1985) p 42

67. Blain (1985) note 28, p 46

68. Flint, p. 52

69. Flint, pp. 54-55

70. Flint, p. 55

71. See Alexandre Kojève, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit, translated by James H. Nichols, Jr. (Basic Books: New York & London, 1969) pp 3-30, for the Master-Slave dialectic. See Mary Kelly, Post-Partum Document, (Routledge & Kegan Paul: London, Boston, Melbourne & Henley, 1983, especially 'Documentation VI Pre-writing alphabet, exercise and diary' pp165-190. for a brilliant treatment of learning to write and its place in socialisation.
72. It is remarkable how many of the schizophrenic persons, whose actions Laing attempted to understand, exhibit attitudes to language that are characteristic of modernist literature. The final study 'The Ghost of the Weed Garden' is particularly expressive of this, with lines that would not disgrace T.S. Eliot e.g. 'The pitcher is broken, the well is dry.' (p 223).
73. Peter Brooks 'Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism' in Critical Inquiry, 13,2 (1987) pp 334-348 (p 342)
74. See Freud SE X11, 145-156
75. The Life of Charles Dickens, (1872-74), 1928 edition, edited by J.W.T. Ley, vol 1, p. 4
76. [DC 45-46] passage quoted below.
77. Edger Johnson, Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph, 2 vols, (Gollancz: London, 1953), vol 1, p. 13 citing Robert Langton The Childhood and Youth of Charles Dickens, (Hutchinson, 1891)
78. For Julia Kristeva's theory of rhythm underlying language see her Revolution in Poetic Language, translated by Margaret Waller (Columbia University Press; New York, 1984) especially pp. 25-31
79. Forster, The Life of Charles Dickens, p. 35
80. Christmas Stories pp 1- 18 (pp 6-7), quoted by Edger Johnson, Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph, p 13
81. See Thomas Gurney, Brachygraphy, or an Easy and Compendious System of Shorthand, 13th edition, (J & M Gurney, 1803)
82. Charles Mackay, Pen and Pencil, pp. 133-135, extracted in Philip Collins, Charles Dickens: Interviews and Recollections, vol 1, p 14-15 Forster's Life concurs with the speed and accuracy of Dickens' shorthand transcriptions. See Forster, The Life of Charles Dickens pp. 59-72
83. 'Language into Structure: Pickwick Revisited', Daedalus, Vol 101 (1972), pp183-202
84. 'Language into Structure: Pickwick Revisited', p. 193

85. Marcus refers to Ernst Gombrich, Art and Illusion (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp 330-358 and Ernst Kris, Psychoanalytic Explorations of Art, (New York, 1952).
86. This term seems first to have been used by Viktor Sklovskij in 1914. See Peter Steiner, Russian Formalism: a Metapoetics, (Cornell University press; Ithaca and London, 1984), pp. 48
87. For other examples of the use of a slate for communication when a person is unable to speak see Bleak House in which Sir Leicester Dedlock loses the power of intelligible speech after the flight of his wife and is reduced to writing with a slate pencil like a child. [BH 761-763]. In Master Humphrey's Clock pp. 84-85, Pickwick writes on a slab to communicate with a deaf man.
88. See Harry Stone, 'What's in a Name: Fantasy and Calculation in Dickens, DSA, Vol 14 (1985) pp 191- 204
89. 'Autobiography as De-Facement' MLN 94:5, December 1979, 919-930, reprinted as chapter 4 of The Rhetoric of Romanticism pp. 67-81 (p.76)
90. One might compare Stephen Dedalus' search for his father's initials carved upon a school desk, which is preempted by Stephen's reading of the word 'Foetus' cut into the wood. See Maud Ellman, 'Disremembering Dedalus: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man' in Untying the Text edited by Robert Young, pp. 189- 206 which is an excellent consideration of language and patriarchy from a Lacanian perspective
91. All the Year Round, vol 4, No. 87, December 22nd 1860, p. 242
92. 'The Medium of Great Expectations', DSA, Vol 11 (1983), pp 73-88 (p 85)
93. Jordan (1983) p 86
94. See Sam Weller's 'Valentine' [PP 496- 500] which his father urges him to sign 'Pickvick... its a wery good name and a easy one to spell.' [PP 500] and also the letter that Tony Weller has written by a scribe which informs Sam, Weller's second wife is dead. This letter is unpunctuated and signed 'infernally yours' [PP 802-803]
95. Since hart and heart are homophones, then the substitution of hart cannot indicate any non-standard pronunciation. It is a sign of Joe's partial literacy, we are encouraged to laugh at his attempts, even while admiring his values.
96. 'Reading in Great Expectations', PMLA 91 (1976) pp 259-265 (p 262)

97. Robin Gilmour, The Idea of the Gentleman in the Victorian Novel, (George Allen & Unwin: London, 1981) p 127. Gilmour bases much of his evidence upon Mary Edminson, 'The date of the action of Great Expectations', Nineteenth Century Fiction, vol. 13 (1958) pp. 22-35
98. John Forster, The Life of Charles Dickens p 4
99. In The Written Word: Literacy in Transition, edited by Gerd Baumann (Wolfson College Lectures 1985) (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1986) pp 96-131
100. Angus Calder, in his Penguin edition of Great Expectations, shows that there are significant sociolinguistic differences in Biddy's letter which Dickens revised in the 1868 edition, the effect of which is to make her marginally more genteel and to make less prominent the fact that she calls herself Pip's servant. Appendix C p. 498 of Calder's edition
101. Max Byrd, 'Reading in Great Expectations' suggests an analogy between Magwitch spelling it out to Pip, and Joe spelling out Pip's letter.
102. See William C. Spengeman, The Forms of Autobiography, (Newhaven, Conn., 1980), pp. 128-132; Barry Westburg, The Confessional Fictions of Charles Dickens, (Dekalb, Ill., 1977) p. 193. Murrey Baumgarten makes the point that 1849, the year in which David Copperfield was written is 200 years after the beheading of Charles 1, see 'Writing and David Copperfield', DSA, 14 (1985). However, Jerome Buckley, 'The Identity of David Copperfield' in Victorian Literature and Society: Essays Presented to Richard D. Altick edited by James R. Kincaid and Albert J. Kuhn (Ohio Uv Press, Ohio, 1984) pp 225- 239 suggests an association with Richard Dadd, the fairy painter who was confined to an asylum after murdering his father. Mr Dick's real name is Richard Babley. But aside from the name and the condition of insanity there seems no reason to favour this identification. It is a common practice for novelists to assemble characters from fragments of the lives of people the writer knew or had heard of, altering details for artistic purposes. I see no reason why Dickens should not have fabricated Mr Dick from an imaginative treatment both of Dadd and himself. It should be remembered that Dadd, insane or not remained a successful painter, while Mr. Dick writes a form of autobiography. 'Babley' might be a phonetic transformation of 'Dadd', but it also obviously suggests 'babble' - to talk wildly.
103. Mark Lemon [1809-1870] was a prolific playwright, journalist, editor and a founder of Punch. A brief biography will be found in Appendix C of Harry Stone's Uncollected Writings, volume 2, p. 653
104. Reprinted in Harry Stone, The Uncollected Writings of Charles Dickens, vol 1, pp 139- 142 (p 142)

105. Michel Foucault Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason, translated by Richard Howard (Tavistock, 1967) especially the conclusion pp. 279-289

106. Welsh, 'Writing and Copying in the age of Steam' in Kincaid (1984) p 45

107. Clarendon edition, Appendix C, p. 767. cited by Welsh

Chapter 6. Conclusion

1. John Frow, Marxism and Literary History (1986)

2. V. N. Voloshinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, p. 94

3. Robert Scholes, 'Deconstruction and Communication' Critical Inquiry 14, (Winter 1988), pp. 278-295 (p. 291)

4. Christine Brooke-Rose, A Rhetoric of the Unreal, p. 49

5. Felix Guattari, Molecular Revolution, p. 64

6. Umberto Eco, 'The Frames of Comic "Freedom"' in Carnival, edited by Umberto Eco and others, Approaches to Semiotics 64 (Mouton, Berlin, New York, Amsterdam, 1984), pp. 1-9 (p. 6)

7. See R. Balibar, Le Français national (Paris, 1973)

8. Street, Literacy in Theory and Practice

9. The Literacy Myth (1979)

10. See Peter Burke, The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy and The Social History of Language, edited with Roy Porter

11. Stone, p. 119

12. Stephen Marcus, 'Language into Structure: Pickwick Revisited'

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Works by Charles Dickens

Each title is preceded by the abbreviated title which is used to refer to it in the text. As described in the prefatory References to Dickens' Works (p. 3 above), I have referred to the scholarly Clarendon edition, where this has been available. Elsewhere, the abbreviated title refers to the Oxford Illustrated Dickens, which is both reasonably comprehensive and generally available.

BR	<u>Barnaby Rudge</u> (OUP, 1954)
BH	<u>Bleak House</u> (OUP, 1948)
CS	<u>Christmas Stories</u> (OUP, 1956)
DC	<u>David Copperfield</u> , edited by Nina Burgis (Clarendon, Oxford, 1981)
DS	<u>Dombey and Son</u> , edited by Alan Horsman (Clarendon, Oxford, 1974)
ED	<u>Edwin Drood</u> , edited by Margaret Cardwell (Clarendon, Oxford, 1972)
GE	<u>Great Expectations</u> (OUP, 1953)
HT	<u>Hard Times</u> (OUP, 1955)
LD	<u>Little Dorrit</u> (OUP, 1953)
MC	<u>Martin Chuzzlewit</u> , edited by Margaret Cardwell (Clarendon, Oxford, 1982)
NN	<u>Nicholas Nickleby</u> (OUP, 1950)
OCS	<u>The Old Curiosity Shop</u> (OUP, 1951)
OMF	<u>Our Mutual Friend</u> (OUP, 1952)
OT	<u>Oliver Twist</u> , edited by Kathleen Tillotson (Clarendon, Oxford, 1966)
PP	<u>The Pickwick Papers</u> , edited by James Kinsley (Clarendon, Oxford, 1986)
SB	<u>Sketches by Boz</u> (OUP, 1957)
TTC	<u>A Tale of Two Cities</u> (OUP, 1949)
UT	<u>The Uncommercial Traveller</u> (OUP, 1958)

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